



INFORMATION PASSENGER CAR EXCHANGE

From the President



The new normal, let's hope not. Soon and very soon we will start to dip our toes back into the water to see if the curve stays down. For most of us, I believe this will be a slow start up. Even if we want to open up fully, I believe there will be a hesitation by the general public to be confined with large groups in small places. So how do we start up?

I'm sure several of your operations are already discussing these issues. Assuming it's safe to open, how do we convince a society to climb back on board our trains? Those with open window cars could advertise fresh air seating with distancing with every other row of seats blocked off. Business and private cars could be rented to families or groups that choose to ride, but want isolation from everyone else. Then we have the ticket area, gift shops and boarding areas. These locations are typically crowded. How about loading passengers and the use of the handrails, door handles, restrooms, etc.? There are a lot of questions if you plan on opening up. Questions we all would like answers to. As you approach these issues, ***can you share those thoughts with our editor so we could put your suggestions in the next Information Exchange?***

Throughout the railroad industry, there are several waivers in place to make sure the railroads continue to operate during this crisis. I know there are several in our specific part of the industry that are working hard on waivers as it applies to our equipment. Brad Black has also worked on getting the information out to Amtrak on inspections on private cars and how we are effected by the current lock-down. This is new territory to all of us, including those who set the regulations and standards under which we operate.

The board is also looking at two items. The first is a reduction in our membership dues based on current members. We will have more information in advance of our renewal dates. The second item is actually being handled by Charles in regard to our upcoming Conference. We are working through scenarios and "what ifs". Those conversations and suggestions are currently happening between North Carolina Transportation Museum and our Conference Coordinator. We should have more information after July 1st of this year.



I'm a student of history like most of you. The above picture is a sign of the times. I went home on the eve of Good Friday for a small family emergency unrelated to the virus. Good Friday morning I spent a few minutes visiting my wife prior to returning to Michigan. As you can see we were practicing social distancing and face masks (also had rubber gloves on).

The picture below is a sign from the back of our round house at Saginaw that I was told dates back to WW2. "Serve Safely For Victory". It was a good message then and it's a good message in 2020. Two pictures, during two different crisis. It's a reminder of gratitude for all those times in between. Those times before Social Distancing was in our vocabulary. We will find our way back to those times.

In closing, thank you for those that have sent me emails responding to my pictures of the heart shape knot in my last article. Some even sent me pictures of "positive perspective". As hard as these times are, it's all about perspective.

Be Safe,

W. Roger Fuehring

President, RPCA



RPCA/Amtrak Conference Call April 24, 2020



RPCA Members present:

Brad Black
Burt Hermey
Mike Stickel

Amtrak members present:

Mike DeAngelo
Steve Robusto
Beverly Davis
Theresa Smith
Necho Terry

Amtrak does not have any proposed PV moves on the books until mid-June, and only a few through the end of summer.

Amtrak wants the PV business and welcomes movement requests.

Please DO NOT FAX movement requests, as all personnel in the special movements and charter trains are working from home, and have no means to retrieve faxes. Use the email address instead!

All long distance trains are running, albeit with reduced consists. In most cases, locomotives have not been reduced, so consist limitations should not generally pose new access issues for PV's.

Some services, such as Hiawathas, may not be available. Hiawatha service has been converted to bus at least through May.

These changes are very fluid, so please check with your representative for details.

Full service dining has been replaced with simpler options on all long-distance trains for the duration of the COVID19 crisis.

Amtrak's web site has been updated with the new long-term parking agreement, which reduces the term from 6 months to 3 months. Also on the site is the special discounted rate for Los Angeles during the upcoming summer months.

Inspections: The requirement that an inspector can only inspect a car twice in a row before a new inspector must be sought has been waived through the end of the year due to the COVID19 crisis and restrictions on travel.

Burt Hermey

Legislative



The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is making more than \$1 billion under the recently enacted Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act available to Amtrak “to support the railroad’s activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the spread of COVID-19) in the U.S. and its impacts on operations and business.”

FRA will make or amend existing grants to Amtrak to provide approximately \$1.02 billion: \$492 million for the Northeast Corridor and \$526 million for National Network Grants, as authorized by sections 11101(a) and 11101(b) of the FAST (Fixing America’s Surface Transportation) Act, the multimodal surface transportation legislation that provides statutory parameters for FRA’s execution and oversight of grant agreements with Amtrak for federal funds appropriated by Congress. At least \$239 million of the CARES Act funds will help mitigate the cost of providing service on Amtrak’s 28 State-supported intercity passenger rail routes, where, under PRIIA (Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008), State governments are required to pay for ticket revenue shortfalls. These funds will be used in lieu of any increase in States’ payments.

Membership News

We have a request from Railinc that should work out to our benefit if we can make it happen. To make it happen we need data.

Who operates a, or on a, short line or regional RR using freight cars and/or maintenance of way equipment (that includes caboose/van/hack) that never leaves that line in interchange but for whatever reason must be registered in Umler, and how many cars?

Please respond back to Pamm and Dan Monaghan

LL: 309.493.1013 www.rpcnb.com

RPCA Conference

We know a number of you are probably wondering, how will the covid virus affect next January's Conference planned for Spencer. We know it is 8 months away and right now there are a lot of unanswered questions. As we see how the response to the virus plays out and how it affects everyone's lives, we will keep you informed as to our plans.

Charles Barthold, RPCA Conference Coordinator
612-529-3428

In Memoriam

RPCA Member Phil Sheridan passed away April 18, at the age of 83, from complications of a chronic illness. Phil was a member of the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance for 25 years and of the American Association of Private Railcar Owners (AAPRCO) for 20 years. Owner of several private railcars, his most recent purchase was of the Pony Express. He and his wife Esther lived in Novato, CA.

There is no information on memorial arrangements at this time.

Thoughts From the Membership

My How Things Have Changed

by Henry Weller

My recent resignation from the Board of Directors has caused me to think about lots of things which had never crossed my mind previously. My primary reason for resigning was to make room for "new blood" in the upper ranks of the organization. . . . plus 35 or so years is long enough (My God, that's a third of a century!).

We all know that as time progresses, things change. But, unless we really zero in on some specifics, sometimes we don't realize just how much has changed and how fast it occurred. Let me give you a few examples:

I hired out on the Chicago Division of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company in September of 1964, the month following my 18th birthday. It was also about 3 months after my graduation from Whitewater High School in Franklin County, Indiana. To be considered for employment, you had to be over 18 years of age. When I hired out, I was the entire Agent's and (Telegraph) Operator's Extra Board on the Division extending from Cincinnati to Chicago. There was plenty of work.

The three months prior to my being hired were spent "sitting in" or learning the various jobs on the division. While I didn't have a chance to work all of the open offices and jobs, I did manage to qualify on most jobs on the East end - Peru to Cincinnati. The practice of learning the job on your own time continued after becoming a permanent employee. After shadowing the employee who worked the job regularly for some time, he or she would send the Chief Train Dispatcher - our boss, C.B. Riggle - a letter stating that my performance was satisfactory and that I was qualified to work the job on my own. I eventually qualified for all the jobs represented by the ORT (Order of Railroad Telegraphers) on the Division.

That brings up another topic of potential interest. Pay. At that time, each job was rated as opposed to each individual. If you were "qualified" to work the job, you were compensated at whatever rate the job carried. It didn't matter if you had 2 days or 20 years experience, if you could do the job, you got the rate. That has always impressed me as a very fair way to pay people. My pay varied depending on where I was working and what I was doing. Generally, the rate was in the \$3.00 + range. It doesn't sound like much money today but I was making as much or more than either of my parents at the time. How many readers were required or allowed to learn their job on their own time but on company premises?

The local (Union) agreement was such that, as an Extra Board employee, if I didn't work more than 4 days on any assignment, I didn't make any overtime. I recall that at one time I worked over 40 consecutive days and didn't get a cent of overtime. At the time, I thought it was great. Imagine getting paid *real money* to hang around various places on the railroad! When I got off work, I could snoop around and no one could or wanted to throw me off the property. Life was good.

About half of the jobs I worked were small rural agencies. Physically, all of the rural agency's were very similar. Frame structures built in the first decade of the 20th century, heated by one or more coal stoves and lacking indoor plumbing. They all had the faint aroma of coal smoke, kerosene and creosote mixed with various types of pollen and grain dust. The jobs were primarily "Agent/Operator" positions. You handled train movements as well as taking care of the customer's needs such as car ordering, waybilling, tracing, expense billing, maintaining Demurrage records, etc., etc. Since you handled train movements as well as Agency work, you had to maintain standard signaling items as well. In addition to fuses, torpedoes and flags, there were two kerosene lanterns - one red and one white or clear - which had to be kept filled with wicks trimmed and ready to light. If the office was open after dark, the lamps had to be lit and ready for immediate use until the office closed or sunrise, whichever came first. By today's standards, it all seems pretty archaic now but, at the time, it seemed very logical. After all, "We've always done it that way".

Radios were just becoming commonplace at that time. Most locomotives were radio equipped and the larger stations had base radios. As you might expect, the early radio transmissions left something to be desired in terms of sound quality. This led some train service employees to brand them as "unsafe". I've seen a number of switch crews refuse to use radios and do all switching with hand signals. At the time, that posed no problem as all crews consisted of 5 or 6 men (as opposed to "persons"). Usually a road

crew consisted of an Engineer, Fireman, Head brakeman, Flagman and Conductor. No wonder operating ratios were low!

At that time, all road freight trains in Indiana had either 5 man or 6 man crews. Indiana had a "Full Crew Law" which stated that, if a train had over 69 cars, a third brakeman must be utilized. It's ironic to note that trains of this size were almost always through trains that did no enroute switching. It has always been my belief that the "Full Crew Law" was a holdover from the pre-airbrake days. I'm also sure that the "Brotherhoods" had something to do with its longevity.

Standard power on the Chicago Division at that point in history was EMD F7's, GP7's and GP9's. The F7's came in both A and B models, GP7's were 1500HP w/o dynamic brakes and the GP9's were 1750HP with dynamic brakes. Most road moves rated 3 or 4 units but 5 or 6 units was not unheard of on Westbound coal trains. There were no scheduled passenger trains on the division but the occasional "special" was handled by E8 units from another division (usually the Cincinnati Div'n). There were also a few - very few - FP7's which were Dual service units but were only used in freight service during my tenure. Most yard engines were NW2's or SW7's. All very neat but certainly small by today's standards. When the first "second generation" units appeared (GP30's, SD35's, U25B's) they were used on time freights where the extra horsepower could be used to better advantage.

Probably the biggest difference between then and now was the people. First, there were a lot more of them. As was discussed earlier, train crews were larger and they were more numerous since there were more but smaller individual train movements. Second, there were more terminals because there were more individual railroads. Each terminal had its own support staff, mechanical staff, etc. It is said that, during the first half of the 20th century, one out of every five employed people in the United States was employed, directly or indirectly, by a railroad company.

The greatest disparity I've seen is in the mindset of many of today's railroaders and railroad companies. Formerly, any prior, relevant experience you brought to the job was considered a plus. By contrast, there is at least one railroad company that considers previous experience to be undesirable. I have no idea why that is the case but I know it to be true. People have been fired for being related to other employees.

Along those same lines, there aren't many "railroad families" today, at least by comparison. I have worked with fathers and sons, brothers, uncles and nephews and just about any other combination you can think of. At one time, I had a father, two sons and a son-in-law in my employ. I found it to be an advantageous arrangement. If there was a problem with one of "the boys", a brief conversation with Dad got everything straightened out very quickly and easily. I liked it!

There was also a very definite family atmosphere when you went to work which is almost non-existent in the industry today. You didn't work for "The Railroad", you were a "C&O (or any other road) man". There was a definite attachment to the company you served as opposed to the separatism which seems prevalent in 2020. Aside from that, many of the people you worked with were likely family friends.

This has been enough - maybe too much - of a trip "down memory lane." Today's world is far more efficient than it was in the 1960's. This is true in all phases of our life. We enjoy many conveniences today which were unheard of at that time. What amazes me is how much of a societal change I've seen in my lifetime. Hm-m-m. Very interesting.

A Look Back at the Influenza Epidemic of 1918

By Gary Carter

In the spring of 1918, an Army cook returning to a camp in Kansas, has been attributed to bringing the "Influenza" to the US. Once the virus gained a foothold in the Army camps, we became part of the worldwide pandemic nicknamed the Spanish Flu. Set against the backdrop of WWI, Spain remained neutral and its news sources were not censored. The flu did not originate in Spain, but because of the open reporting there on the virus, the name stuck.

The flu circulated from April through July and started to die down during the summer months. However, two dock workers in Boston contracted the "mutated" virus and thus started a second wave of influenza in the US. This version of the virus was more deadly than the first and there are cases where a worker would go to work in the morning with a sore throat and be deceased by the end of their shift. It was a horrific end to one's life. It was this second wave which took its toll on Americans. In 1919 there was actually a third wave of influenza which was not as severe as the second.

During this second wave, masks became part of the outer attire. This was not as effective as first thought as many of the masks were made of gauze and did not provide much protection. Social distancing was being practiced in some cities and disregarded in others. St Louis placed stay at home orders and

required masks early on and they had a relatively low infection and death rate. Philadelphia, on the other hand, held a War Bond rally with 200,000 spectators and 72 hours later, every hospital in the city was over capacity. Again, with the war moving men and women around the world, crowded troop ships and trains did not lend themselves to social distancing.

Pullman personnel would ask passengers boarding the train if they were experiencing any flu like symptoms, trying to screen for the illness. At one point, cities along train routes would require a passenger to produce a document from their local health department stating that the passenger had already had the virus, before the city would allow the passenger to leave the train.

Disinfecting solutions were made of such things as carbolic acid, formaldehyde and zinc chloride and were highly effective. Along with being effective, some were also toxic. Pullman used such cleaners in their cars and factories with some success.

This pandemic killed 50 million people worldwide and over 675,000 in the US alone. The US death toll of 675,000 exceeded the total number of deaths in all of the wars in the 20th century for the US. It was devastating to say the least.

Today, it does appear as though we did learn from this historical event. Stay at home orders, social distancing and the wearing of masks can make a difference. Last month, many states and mayors took an early stance to shut down their states or towns by instituting the stay at home orders. Next, they limited the size of groups and urged social distancing. Face masks were then urged for those people going to work or in the public. Don't be in a rush to get back to the way of life before the pandemic. Maintain the social distancing to try to prevent a second wave. Plan on a second wave and be pleasantly surprised if it does not appear. We need to learn some lessons from the 1918 pandemic so any repeat of events can be held to a minimum.

Staying Safe Navigating the Curves of Covid-19



A month has passed and I hope everyone is safe and healthy. My, how things have changed in only a month! Anyone else tired of being cooped up? I know this has been a very difficult time for many of us. Sharing our world of railroading with others has changed. How we safely handle that change will be our challenge. First, congratulations to everyone to help flatten that nasty Covid Curve. It looks like we have made a huge dent in the initial infection rate. Social distancing and face masks certainly contributed to the success.

As of this writing, it appears as though things are opening up around the first of May. My advice is to go slow. Watch what other parts of the country and world are doing. There are way too many unanswered questions to blaze into something. It appears the distancing and masks are going to be a part of the partial opening.

Going forward safely will be the key for us to get back to some type of railroad operation. Hosting excursions and museum operations might depend on social distancing. Tourist railroads may lead the charge on this one and share their successes with us. How to seat passengers with the distancing requirement will be but one question to answer. How about cleaning the passenger areas between departures? When and how to apply disinfecting solutions to the seats, windows and railings is but one issue ahead of us. Take note of what is Amtrak doing for its passengers. Look at what other industries are doing, especially the airlines. This sort of practice might become the standard for passenger safety. While planning for any event, make safety the priority. Contactless ticket sales, boarding lines with markings on the platform, seating arrangements and cleaning procedures may need to be considered for any event. Consider the safety of the staff and volunteers. What type of PPE might be required? Are there local, county and state orders limiting the size of gatherings?

Future events will strictly depend on how well we as a nation respond to getting back to the new normal. It is not out of the question to have a second wave in a few months and planning for such an event is prudent. Santa Fe, NM has cancelled 3 major outdoor events this summer, costing them over \$100 million in revenue. Colorado is making plans for some sort of staggered school classes in September. Germany has cancelled Oktoberfest which relates to a tremendous economic impact of 6 billion Euros. Many cities, states and countries are taking this pandemic seriously, as should we. Go slow and steady. Take this time to make plans which will fit into the new rules, keeping in mind those rules can change with the next press conference. If plans are made, outdoor events in late summer might help with the expenses and meet safety guidelines. Smaller events might be the key, with the ability to cancel if things are not going well. At this point, it would be way too early to plan any big event short of our holiday trains. Yes, we have flattened the curve, but our need to stay vigilant is still there. It is great to be creative and figure out how to share our passion for this industry SAFELY with others. Be patient, stay well and stay tuned in. There are more changes coming as the medical data is accumulated. Let's all work to get those wheels rolling again.

Gary Carter

UMLER REPORT



We hope that everyone is doing OK being stuck in their caves, or barns, or other domiciles. Reminds us of the old song "Counting Flowers on the Wall". Except working from a home office, we are used to it. With fuel prices as low as they are, we'd rather be out visiting the membership! Those of you that must go out into public, please be careful.

- New Umler Data Spec Manual is dated March 19!
- We are still working our way through the OT-57 issue. And another change to that is coming. Stay tuned!
- We and many of you already have gotten a notice about DDCT. DDCT is similar to OT-57 in that it is a rule generated for free interchange freight cars, not passenger cars and locos. DDCT is the process to inform the owner or owner's rep that a car or cars have been damaged. The owner has 48 hours to accept the RR's recommendation of what to do, if they don't, the RR is free to do what they wish up to and including scrapping the car. The owner can identify to which shop they want the car to go to. At this time, passenger cars are exempt from DDCT. At this time.

Issue is: freight cars include MoW cars, and MoW cars include canteens/aux tenders/water bottle, therefore anyone that has such a car is subject to the rule mandating a contact identified in Find Us Rail for DDCT. And yes, if one doesn't comply, your equipment could be deleted because it is in conflict with the rules. We did make a little head way as a couple of people inside the bureaucracy understand the issue at least with respect to canteens/aux tenders/water bottles and are looking at possibly finding a way to exempt those.

- We were asked by a member of the Umler Data Quality Task Force why a passenger car manufacturer was stating compliance with the Component ID (CID) for wheels is not possible. Remember that CIDs for several critical safety components are now a mandatory field for all cars built after June 2015, and for the application of such identified parts on all rolling stock, therefore newly delivered passenger cars are immediately in conflict without them. And this is a requirement for Canadian and Mexican equipment also, this is Umler under the AAR, and the

AAR is an international(US, Canada, Mexico) organization with rolling stock moving freely between countries. This has been a topic of the Umler seminars for over 4 years now.

Our response included the fact that many manufacturers don't bother with CID when they know the order is for passenger cars, especially for commuter or Amtrak equipment, because that requirement is not included in the request for quote, nor the production contract. From the builders perspective, it costs additional money to perform something they aren't paid for. Also, that disc brake wheels are unique and peculiar, very low volume in the industry, unlike tread brake wheels that now for passenger cars are just multiple wear 36" freight car wheels for which there is no other excuse why that data is not provided. One can make the case that all tread brake wheels should have CID, as should all axles and bearings, regardless what type of car they are mounted, as we have been saying each year during our seminar! With disc brake wheels, used in most new passenger cars, it may actually take intervention by the government to mandate the requirement because this is not in the current production contracts. Remember, all such new commuter and Amtrak equipment is funded by the Feds in the US, as well as government funded in Canada.

Our recommendation was that if the Equipment Descriptor started with "P" (designating a passenger car) and the brakes were identified as "Disc" or "Disc/Tread", the CID requirement for wheels should be waived, for now. But the manufacturers and users had better get ready, it is coming, just as it is for all of us with tread brakes!

For all our car owners with older equipment, just because the rule doesn't apply to older cars, if your replacement parts have a CID sticker on them, take a picture, write it down, send it to us. We can put it into the system and that way if the industry finds a safety issue with that run of parts, you will get notified.

- Some of us got an email from Railinc about a weight requirement that will hit with the coming December major system update. For those not familiar, Gross Rail Load must equal the sum of the Tare weight and Load Limit weight. Tare weight is defined in the AAR rules for the car stencil as the actual weight rounded to the nearest 100 pounds.

Railinc wants to make the Umler record match the car stencil. The air date stenciled on the car and in Umler must match, hard to argue against that one? **EXCEPT:** The AAR rule for the weight stencil is for FREIGHT cars, passenger cars aren't stenciled with weights! OOOPS, don't let facts interfere with the exercise of power.

But, this is another item not worth fighting over. It just means that the Umler weight accuracy is plus or minus 50 pounds from what is in the record. In the 4 plus decades we've been involved in railroading, we have yet to find a car that weighs in at a number ending in the last two digits being 00.

On a 100,000 pound plus tare weight, that isn't much variance from real, 5 hundredths of one percent is inconsequential. From our experience, there is more variation between sister cars that came down the assembly line sequentially than that due to production tolerances, and being wrong on the number of passengers or crew by just one person is 5 times that rounding variation. Being a mechanical engineer, Dan likes the data to be accurate, that means weights to the pound. But this isn't our call, even though technically it is not justifiable per their reasoning.

That means that we must check every passenger car tare weight entry in Umler that it is entered as an even hundreds of pounds. Two zeroes on the end of the tare weight number. Properly rounded either up or down. That also means that we may have to change the Load Limit and Gross so that the math still works! The computer is good at checking the math, and is not afraid to tell you that your math is wrong and not accept the data input.

We will have that done well before December. Another one of those things we do in the background that just takes time.

- People have asked why we don't fight for every little issue. And, for those unfamiliar with how RPCNB got started in Umler almost two decades ago, a quick review. All rolling stock, even old equipment just headed to the scrap yard, must be registered in Umler. Because there are so few rail field personnel left there is no one to wander the yards and make sure cars are going where they are supposed to go, it is up to computers to watch over them.

Because of Y2K alone, the Universal Machine Language Equipment Register (UMLER, notice the all caps, it is an acronym) had to be rebuilt. This was a very arcane system coded in an obsolete language that started with 70 position punch cards, and ended with "virtual" 100 position punch cards on the computer screen. While the AAR/Railinc was at it, they took the advantages of cheap memory and larger capacity data bases to GREATLY simplify the way the data was processed. There were a couple fields where a two character code identified one of over 18 combinations of different rolling stock characteristics in the old system. That is why the data specification was a huge document. Today, each characteristic has its own data field. And the data spec manual has reduced greatly in size, but it is still a large document.

At that time, users without T1 line access (all the little people like us) were paying \$26.50 per minute for Umler access through Compuserve via the internet! That is why we developed a process to "build" the car or loco off-line, and then Dan would read the data to Pamm for input. We could input a car in UMLER in about 20 seconds, a loco in less than 35. When the railroads learned how low our computer bill was, they asked us to teach them our process.

So, how did we get involved? During the period when RPCNB was registering the first steam loco, Dan generated a document that went to Railinc identifying the issues we had with the old system and hoping those would not remain in the new. That caused the program manager for EMIS (Equipment Management Information System, the UMLER replacement later called Umler {notice not all caps, it is a name for industry continuity}) to invite us to join the EMIS task force. Then RPCA President Weller noted that we were sending the Vixen into the hen house with a big smile and sent us off to do good.

One must realize that the AAR works for the free interchange of freight cars, as well as establishing standards and recommended practices for the entire industry. The industry is here to move FREIGHT. They use diesel locos to move the cars. Passenger cars and steam locos were and are not in priority consideration, and few people on the committee had experience with them. Voting is in a priority order, those with the most FREIGHT cars at the top.

Also, the 7 class ones railroads are predominately bearing the financial weight of the system, and any upgrades thereto. All that are AAR members contribute through their membership dues, but then neither RPCNB nor RPCA are AAR members.

That means that for all of the changes we have recommended, we got a free ride. The class ones paid the cost to change the system for our advantage. In some cases the change provided no advantage to the class ones, but they did it for us to make the system work. Our estimate is that RPCNB and GLR has spent over \$8 million of the class ones' money making changes that predominately benefited the RPCA, AAPRCO, small private owners and shops, and the commuter agencies and Amtrak in the US, and similar in Canada.

There is no way that even the combination and sum of all passenger car and steam owners could have afforded that kind of expense. That is why we are careful to only go into mental combat with the various committees over something that is important, not just a nuisance.

- Reminder for air technicians that are not RPCNB CATs (Certified Air Technicians): your certification also carries an additional requirement. Under AAR rules, the PERFORMER of the air test is to upload the data to Umler within 48 hours. That is the rule, almost never met. That means the performing air tech or air tech's employer needs Umler "Inspections" portal access. Your certification does NOT provide such access. Don't expect the car owner to be able to upload the data, they probably don't have any kind of Umler access and it is the performing air tech's responsibility. That is why RPCNB has a shop code, for its CATs. That is your venue to upload air test data, use it. You get to add the cost to your invoice for your work. And you keep your customer happy because their car is not rejected for movement because it is in conflict for OOD-A (Out Of Date - Air, identified in Umler by the management code XB).

Also, OTMA (One Time Move Authority) from the FRA requires an air test to prove the air brake system properly works, even though out of date. Today, the IDT is used mostly for Amtrak annual inspection air tests. Umler doesn't discriminate between COT&S, IDT and OTMA air test, an air test is an air test and gets loaded the same way: Reporter, Performer, Date to the day, Location SPLIC and whether a manual, automated or automated 4 port test device was used. Our internal records capture all of that plus the brake system configuration of service, emergency and relay portions, and the type or reason for test. We

calculate the next due date from the COT&S dates and model brake system, and have that immediately available for each car if anyone has a question. And we DO get asked.

- We are working on a scheme to see if we can reduce the cost of Umler registrations for owners with multiple pieces of rolling stock. We'll explain more a little closer to renewal time, and that is not THAT far away! Remember, in the AAR, the more pieces of rolling stock an owner has registered, the more power they have with respect to discussions and voting! For RPCNB, we don't get a vote, but it does help the discussions.

The original fees were based on the premise that almost all the cars that would be registered under the RPCNB mark were a single owner with a single car, and that is what we were when we started back then. Hasn't worked out quite like that more recently. The RPCNB BoD and RPCA BoD has approved a change. It will be included in the renewal notices that go out in just a little over a month!

- We still need someone to start learning this job! So far two thought they might, saw what it takes and changed their mind. Yes, this job gets nitty-gritty deep, has many hard requirements, but at least most of the time the hours are flexible. But it is mandatory someone(s) do it or RPCNB has no reason to exist and a lot of members lose access to a reporting mark or Umler access for their own mark.

If you think it costs a lot now to use the RPCNB mark, if the RPCA Board must pay a company to manage the reporting mark, it is going to cost a VERY large amount more.

Learning this job could set one up for a permanent position with a railroad, or like us, a contractor/consultant doing it for several customers.

Rule 1 from Dan's old rule book: When in doubt, the safe course must be taken. That applies to not only track side, but to life. Take care, stay safe.

P&D

Pamm and Dan Monaghan

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



Branson Scenic Railway closed on March 20th due to an ordinance passed by the Board of Aldermen requiring all businesses to limit the number of people to 10. Our Mechanical department continues to work on projects and provide security. We hope to re-open in some fashion on May 15th, but that is subject to the current situation.

BSR applied for and received a CARES PPP Loan.

The photograph was provided by the Chamber Convention and Visitors Bureau. Looking west toward the Hilton Hotel as a symbol of hope with our depot and train at the bottom.

The Durango & Silverton is acquiring four of the White Pass & Yukon Railway's Montreal Locomotive Works DL535C diesels, 1,200-hp C-C locomotives built in 1969 and 1971. The first two locomotives, Nos.

101 and 107, were loaded on a barge in Skagway, Alaska, in April to begin a multi-week trip to Colorado. The other two units will be selected later this year and moved to Colorado in the second quarter of 2021. Steamtown National Historic Site has cancelled its Railfest weekend scheduled for June 13-14, and cancelled all excursions scheduled through July 4, 2020. A release from the Scranton site says the park staff will need eight to 12 weeks to meet Federal Railroad Administration regulations for operations once a reopening date is determined.

Amtrak/Federal Agencies



Stay-at-home orders have decimated Amtrak ridership and revenue and management is now studying possible service changes when conditions improve.

Board Chairman Tony Coscia, new President and CEO Bill Flynn, and Stephen Gardner, executive vice president and chief operating and commercial officer recently told reporters that Amtrak will continue to execute major capital projects such as its next-general Acela 21 trains, and is working with Congress and the Trump Administration on the Fiscal 2021 appropriation and potential infrastructure funding plans.

Preliminary studies show that it will be about three months or more before people expect to travel as they did before the downturn began according to Flynn. Gardner emphasized that Amtrak wants to connect better with customers throughout their journey including new ticketing kiosks, text messaging informing passengers where to head when they arrive at stations, and the ability to pre-order food from cafe cars.

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