



The logo for the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance (RPCA) features a central circular emblem with the words "RAILROAD" at the top and "ALLIANCE" at the bottom. A horizontal banner across the center contains the words "PASSENGER CAR" in a stylized font. Below the banner, the words "INFORMATION" and "EXCHANGE" are written in large, bold, yellow letters with black outlines. The entire graphic is set against a background of a black and white passenger train.

From the President



Are you getting tired of 2020 yet? I'm sure there is nothing more I can say to ease the pain that many individuals, and organizations are going through. The concerns about additional outbreaks is all too real. The economic impact to our operations will have lasting effects. So what do we do?

First and foremost, we can't lose hope. That may sound like a bumper sticker slogan, but it can't be an option. Yes it's true that we will see some operations close their doors for good, and that will be heartbreaking. Others will continue to pull through even if the second wave hits hard. This great country has seen unrest in several communities, and that could get worse as we draw closer to the election. There is no doubt, we are in for a long haul.

For the already hard hit private car operations, we now have the concern that long distance passenger trains will not survive after the announcement of upcoming service cuts. The lock down and concern for social distancing has hit Amtrak especially hard, along with all modes of public transportation.

As we approach 40 years at RPCA (2022), its times like these that our friendships will help see us through, as we struggle for answers. We look to those who are starting up and planning long term. Many are rolling the dice as they put together aggressive seasons with new safety parameters. We will have success stories. We need to share with one another what works, and what doesn't. A few plan to stay shutdown during all of 2020. For others, that's not an option.

Whatever your story is, it's not finished yet. We will see our cars out there again alongside our diesels and steam locomotives. Museums will be back open and gift shops will be busy. This too shall pass. It may look different than we envision, but the public loves our trains.

We will be sharing more information in the August IE on how we at RPCA will be moving forward. Your Board of Directors will be meeting in July to discuss our various options for conference. In the meantime, I pray that you have a safe and fun summer.



In closing I want share another picture of hope. We all have our favorite picture of a child or a grandchild who just loves trains. This is one of mine. My grandson in November 2019 got to truly live his dream. "Papaw, it's the real Polar Express." I was his hero that day and still am. To all of you working so hard to make those dreams happen, Thank You. We will see you soon. Be Safe,

W. Roger Fuehring
President, RPCA



IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NEWS

If you have not renewed your membership and paid your dues this will be your last information exchange....but you still have a few days.

Because of the current hard times, the board of directors has voted to reduce membership renewals to \$25 instead of the \$45. This will only apply for members renewing their membership for 2020-2021. This will not include any new members. Any member who wishes to send the full \$45 may do so and the extra \$20 will be considered a donation to the general RPCA fund.

Please make note the mailing address has been changed:

RPCA Membership
P.O. Box 67
Cordele, GA 31010

Dues are delinquent on July 1, 2020.

Make check payable to RPCA or renew online at JoinRPCA@rpca.com Do not enclose payment to RPCNB. That will be billed separately.

If you have any questions about you renewal please email Chris Lockwood at membershipRPCA@gmail.com

2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

More information about the conference will be sent out in a special email in July. Thank you to all who participated in the survey.

Pittsburgh Air Brake will be holding the first post pandemic air brake class on July 20th and 21st. They will be following all CDC guide lines and ask that if you are ill in any way you do not attend. Please contact their office at 412-278-3600.

Also on July 4 th Pittsburgh Air Brake will be turning 30 years old. PABCO would like to thank customers and friends for all of the support and help over the last 30 years and looking forward to another 30 years and more.

Bill Jubeck
Pittsburgh Air Brake Co., Inc.
401 Main Street
Bentleyville PA

In Memoriam



It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Jack L. Pearson, a wonderful man and huge railfan. Jack passed away peacefully at home on Thursday, June 4, 2020. Jack worked for Amtrak for 42 years, retiring in 2010. Railroading was his passion. According to Jon Clark Jack was a fountain of knowledge about the post-war Heritage passenger cars and a good source of info about the goings-on at Amtrak's Beech Grove shops. He was always a go-to guy for any of those hard-to-answer mechanical questions about our passenger cars, and it's a real loss that we will not have that resource any more. In the last few years, he was enjoying doing a rebuild on his ex-MP Budd smooth-side diner that was one of the very few cars re-patriated from Mexico to the US.

SAFETY



Covid-19 is but one Safety Issue

It appears as though basic Covid-19 safety precautions are not being adhered to. Political rallies without masks and social distancing. Protests across the nation with the same disregard for each other's health. I am sure the spiking number of infections will bear out the need for the masks and distancing. If we are going to get back to some semblance of normalcy, then we must abide by the rules. Until there is an available vaccine, I just don't see it any

other way.

Speaking of rules, we need to be aware that some states and local governments have put in place restrictions which are more stringent than those we are familiar with. For example, in New Mexico, face coverings are mandatory in public. Maximum group size varies across the nation and it can be a challenge to find those guidelines. The list goes on. Before you send out the advertising for your next excursion or event, be sure to check in with the local rule making entity to ensure your event is in compliance with the rules.

So far it has been a hot and dry summer here in the Rocky Mountain West. High heat and low humidities have spelled fire danger across most of the West. We have already seen Stage 1 and 2 fire restrictions so far this summer and we have a long way to go. The first hurdle is the 4th of July. While I am not a big fan of fireworks, I do understand and certainly appreciate the meaning of the 4th. As we work on these cars, we need to be aware of the restrictions placed on cutting and welding the metal needed to repair or restore our rolling stock. I am a big fan of having some sort of fire suppression on hand when working with torches or welders. A garden hose to wet down the combustibles during our work can go a long way.

Covid-19 is not the only safety issue we face as we work on and ride in these passenger cars. Safety comes in many forms and challenges issues we face in our daily lives. Stay safe and pull that mask up to cover your nose! Then wash those hands.....

Gary Carter

Legislative



After 36 hours across two days, the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure advanced the \$494 billion [INVEST in America Act](#). The bill will invest \$58 billion in rail over five years, and institute a series of sweeping reforms to Amtrak governance, operations, and onboard services. The INVEST in America Act is expected to pass the full House with strong Democratic support. However, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation will need to advance its own counterproposal, and financing committees in both houses will need to find out ways to pay for the new investment programs.



Amtrak is offering some special deals for private cars.

Daily Parking Special (5 for 3)

5 nights of Parking for the price of 3 nights

When booking ANY blocks consisting of 5 nights, you will only be billed for 3 nights (i.e. 5 for 3, 10 for 6, 15 for 9).

Nights must be consecutive and at the same location

Long-term parking customers will still receive their discounted daily parking rate during this promotion

Other restrictions may apply, based on availability

Waiving 10% surcharge for close to travel request(s)

Requests made 16-30 days before departure will not be assessed the 10% surcharge

Other restrictions may apply, based on availability

Long-Term Parking Promotion for Los Angeles at \$1500 a month extended

Extended through the next quarter July-September

This is still only a 3-month commitment, compared to the previous 6-month commitment for long term parking

Customers can still take advantage of the daily parking discount for being a long-term parking customer

These incentives are effective for all travel beginning July 1, 2020 and will be valid for travel completed by September 30, 2020.

UMLER REPORT



Current Status

Please remember to renew your Umler registration subscriptions! Everyone should have by now received an email renewal notice, except one who doesn't have a computer. He should have received his invoice by snail mail by now. If you don't intend to renew, please reply back with that statement.

RPCNB is invoiced by Railinc in August for all the rolling stock in our registration roster on July first. Therefore we will be paying for cars and locos that may not be registered through RPCNB later in the year if the subscriber does not inform us of the intent to not renew. That is a hazard of having renewals at the cut-off date for Railinc invoicing. It is also why we need to know as quickly as possible that you are not renewing, before the end of June if possible. Paying for equipment not being renewed does not help us reduce the costs and therefore possibly your fees.

Number of units renewed for 2021 subscription year as of COB June 22, 63 out of the 153 we had at the end of May, and that includes 3 units by a foreign owner! With MANY cars last year registered from the Amtrak auction that are probably one time moves and with the economy the way it is, we don't expect to come close to matching last year.

We are still solvent, and still working on issues that affect our rolling stock "in the system".

June Info Exchange contest

We had 3 people take a whack at it, Dave Fleenor, Renee Luebke, and Borden Black, responding in that order and Dave multiple times. They all had the "Ralston Purina" part right. The correct answer for the full name of the prior mark assignee is the "Ralston Purina Corporation". Sorry Dave, but "Company" doesn't count for "Corporation", but you were the closest.

Thank you three for trying. We are a little disappointed that more people didn't try.

Fudgenuckers!

So why is this incident from years ago important? This incident was a first harsh lesson we learned about how some people will attempt to cheat the system, and how some just don't pay attention and get themselves into trouble, and/or the railroads don't take due care and identify the wrong reporting mark for whatever reason. That was a wake up call for some, but bovine excrement continues to hit the rotating oscillating device. We are now working on clearing up incident number 4. So the question becomes is it the railroads fault for improper identification of the car worked on or the car owners fault for putting a car out for movement not properly registered in Umler?

Please save yourself a hassle. When you do NOT renew a car's/loco's registration, remove the reporting mark and tags. Remember, if you sell the car, and buyer does NOT register with RPCNB and waybills the car with the RPCNB data still on the car, seller is still responsible for the car and the liability if they release it for movement with the RPCNB reporting mark and tags still ping RPCX on it!!!! And both the seller and buyer are subject to railroad, AAR and Fed government action. That could put the seller and

buyer between a rock and a hard place. You REALLY don't want a visit from the Feds! And the Feds we are referring to are much tougher than the FRA.

So what else is happening? Getting even tougher shipping passenger cars long distances in freight train service on any kind of reliable schedule. The move to extremely long trains caused by PSR, in order to reduce cost ratios and increase profits for the big share holders, has significantly reduced the number of trains that don't have DPU power on the rear, thereby reducing the number of trains that passenger cars can ride the more to the rear of. We have some ideas of how to relieve this some, but need some support in working out the details.

Shipping locos dead in tow is getting almost as bad, but at least they usually go first behind lead road power, means no switching in the yard or on the main, when you can get those incoming units to the engine house/service tracks to add in the DIT (Dead In Tow) loco(s). HOWEVER, many, many locos are now turning in the yard, the locos not even going to the engine house. They carry enough fuel to easily make it round trip, and AC motor units have such good traction they don't need sand replenishment. They don't need lube oil topped up because they don't throw oil like they used to. And the computer will tell the crew when it wants someone to do something, therefore fewer inspections. We've had some locos transiting DIT sit over two weeks in a location waiting for the incoming and next outgoing road power to go to the engine house so that the DIT unit(s) could be included in the lead power consist. Why would that happen, with at least one train each way every day where the loco was waybilled through and to???

Answer: Thank you PSR again. The new schedule doesn't allow enough time to run the power to the engine house and have the DIT loco added to the head end power consist. Makes it very evident that the PSR concept never considered the needs of specialty shippers and not just normal freight train operations. Makes one wonder how the rail industry could positively react to any new local, regional or national emergency.

Some good things do happen when carefully put together. We were on the periphery of a special move of a small loco DIT. The little engine that could in spite of 'the rules'.

Umler Specific

Have had 3 major updates to Umler since January, the last on June 18.

The June 18th update included some changes we had asked for!

Loco lengths: range maximum changed from 98 to 140 feet! We can now even get the real length of the Big Boy in!!

Loco weight: title changed from "Weight on Drivers" to "Loco Gross Weight". Range maximum changed to 999999! The data field only has 6 digits, to allow a million pounds plus requires 7. Changing the maximum allowed is a relatively minor change compared to expanding the data field another digit.

Now owners can even put real loco weights in up to 1 pound short of 1 million pounds!! Weights of 1 million pounds or more will have to go into the exception file. The new range covers all the known registered steam locos up through the war time heavy ATSF and SP&S Northerns, except UP 4014. Would have included 3985 in that statement but UP says it won't run again. Also means owners need to update all the diesels that don't have all axles powered to their real total gross weight, e.g. E units, FL9s, PAs.

All of the steam and diesel locos that RPCNB and GLR have access authorization for will be completed by end of July. Any that we don't provide Umler services for should get their weights updated.

Also included are some:

New electronic blue card rules.

Some changes to freight cars mostly with respect to dimensions "business rules". Business rules are how the computer determines if your input is valid or not.

There is a new Umler Data Specification Manual dated June 18, 2020.

The major update coming next January making rounding weights to the nearest hundred mandatory is still coming. Another requirement based on freight cars that is not applicable to passenger cars. It was done because of the AAR rules on freight car weight stencils! The stencil is to read to the nearest 100 pounds. OK, but passenger cars don't have weight stencils! Another one of these we made note of that little inconsequential difference (no weight stencil!) to the powers that be, got the expected response: go sit in the corner and be quiet.

We've completed that task for all the cars under RPCNB already. Remember that the RPCNB internal data base includes the actual weight to the pound if available. There are still many cars under owners' reporting marks that will be in conflict on this issue. If yours are in such conflict, get with your Umler

servicer and get it corrected. After the new edit checks take hold in January, the cars will soon thereafter be subject to deletion if this conflict is not corrected.

LOA, Letter Of Authority, is not a physical paper document any more. If someone wants a third party like RPCNB or GLR to perform their Umler work for their reporting mark, Pamm generates the LOA request electronically. Railinc sends an email to the responsible person for the reporting mark. That email MUST be responded to within two weeks approving the requested LOA. If not, the request is rejected.

Key point: part of the approval process is ensuring that the person identified as authorized to approve the LOA the email is sent to actually DOES work for the mark. I.e., the email address must include the mark owner's company name, e.g. JohnQ@northhandsouthrr.com

It gets interesting when the responsible person does NOT have an email address that identifies the organization as identified by the reporting mark, i.e. a company email address.

The LOA can be for 1, 2 or 3 years, but 2 and 3 years have an annual email check if the responsible party still wants to have it, and then the renewal at the end of the LOA period. Same thing, if not answered in 2 weeks, we lose the LOA and access to your mark.

Why is this important? Interesting how the framers of this requirement had no idea that there are small operations that don't have corporate emails! And, we've already had 3 groups not answer the Railinc email because they aren't in the office due to COVID-19 actions! When they do get back, they are in for a unpleasant surprise, because we haven't been able to perform any Umler maintenance work for them, like rounding weights, or correcting conflicts, because the Railinc LOA continuance email was not replied to. Even worse, some of their cars just may be deleted by the computer by the time they do get back to work because of the conflicts.

We tried to explain these issues to Railinc. They are just following the rules, generated for the benefit of the class ones of which all are essential operations and have people on duty always. The rules do not consider the small operations that don't have 24/7/52 staff, and as an excursion operation only, no freight service, are not essential operations and are shut down. We know of a couple small freight operations that are considered essential operations, BUT are also shut down because the few shippers they have are shut down!

So much for all railroads are essential operations and all are working. And as stated before, many small operations do NOT have a corporate email system, therefore there will NOT be an email address including the operation's name. Therefore the person identified as responsible to authorize a LOA has to prove they are so authorized! Wow, who woulda thunk. Talk about myopic and to an extent not trainable, pun intended. But we have to live with it.

If you fall in to the currently not at work and don't get your company addressed emails categories, you really need to contact your Umler servicer.

Until next time, take care, stay safe.



Who says only Lionel has a bridge right at the tunnel mouth?

The little engine that could, and did make it 3,800 some miles from Moncton, NB to Nanaimo, BC on its own wheels! A few things were against it: AAR type A trucks, albeit better than Blunt but still speed restricted compared to AAR type B, Blomberg or FlexiCoil, did have AP roller bearings, but no alignment control couplers. Took longer than first estimated because it got held



Not many pix of it where it started in the Maritimes, but friends and volunteers of the new owner caught it close to its new home. How about that scenery! Since Dan is x-GTW, owned by CN, he is glad to see them step up to make it happen!

Here it is at its new home coupled to one of RPCA member/RPCNB subscriber Gary Southgate's cars.



Some rivet counters will take exception to all the advertising, but when it takes sponsors to make things happen, you have a choice. Keep it as operated prior and possibly nothing happens, or advertise the sponsors and you have a project. Not a lot of difference between steam locos having 26L brakes, radio & PTC antennae and ditch lights and the wrap applied to this little beastie. Do you want it to run, or rust in peace or get scrapped? That is just one of the

up due to the cessation of rail service in some locales during the political arguments between the First Nation and Canadian government. But it got to its new home OK, albeit with a lot of wheel wear.

changes we've seen over our railroading careers, and this time possibly a change for the better because at least it is running.

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 recent rainstorm has washed out a significant portion of the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad's tracks, effectively cutting off the railroad from Silverton for the next eight to 16 weeks. The rainstorm brought down a massive amount of debris from the Elk Creek drainage, which jammed at the railroad's bridge. The log jam then caused Elk Creek to overflow and wash out more than 40 feet of the D&SNG's tracks. The insurance company for Durango's Purgatory Resort is suing the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad over damages resulting from the 416 Fire, the 2018 wildfire which the U.S. government has said was started by sparks from a D&S locomotive. The suit says the resort was forced to

close for two months, suffering losses to its property and business.

A pair of trestles built nearly 150 years ago along the route of the First Transcontinental Railroad were destroyed in a Utah wildfire. Firefighters were unable to save two small bridges built by the Central Pacific Railroad in the early 1870s.

The Steamtown National Historic Site has now cancelled all scheduled excursions through Sept. 30, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a press release, the site said the decision reflected the lead time needed to perform maintenance on its equipment that could not be completed this spring, along with "concerns about the practicality of implementing CDC, state, and local guidelines regarding COVID-19.

The Rocky Mountaineer has again pushed back the start of its season, postponing all scheduled trips through the end of August. The luxury rail tour company offers multi-day trips from Vancouver, British Columbia. Those holding reservations during the period of the suspension will receive a 110% credit for trips rescheduled later this year, in 2021, or in 2022. The company also says it will hold prices at 2020 levels through that period.

The Cincinnati Museum Center and Holocaust & Humanity Center, located in the Cincinnati Union Terminal, have announced plans to reopen [on July 17](#). They have been closed since March 14 because of COVID-19. Reopening plans include use of timed tickets to aid in social distancing, along with signage and floor markings to assist in maintaining a 6-foot distance. Staff will be required to wear masks, while visitors are asked to do so.

For the first time since 2011, the narrow-gauge East Broad Top Railroad in central Pennsylvania will offer public passenger-train rides Aug. 13-15. The reopening of the National Historic Landmark coincides with the 260th anniversary of the founding of the town of Orbisonia and its twin borough, Rockhill Furnace, home to the company's general offices, machine shops, and roundhouse.

Amtrak/Federal Agencies



Silver Star, 'Meteor' changes coming July 6

Amtrak will alternate service on its two New York-Miami trains running on different routes through the Carolinas as of July 6, a move it attributes to COVID-19 pandemic ridership drops. It is a preview of the company's still mostly undefined plans to cut virtually every long-distance route to triweekly service this fall. The Silver Meteor will leave New York Monday through Thursday, and Miami Sunday through Wednesday, while the Silver Star will operate Friday through Sunday southbound and Thursday through Saturday northbound. The new arrangement means connections to and from the west on the Capitol Limited, Lake Shore Limited, and Cardinal won't be possible every day. For now, the daytime New York-Savannah, Ga., Palmetto running on the Meteor's route remains daily. According to *Trains* magazine in May, combined ridership on the Silver Star and Silver Meteor rose from April even though each train didn't operate every day owing to CSX trackwork south of Richmond, Va. Together, the two trains racked up 7.2 million passenger miles generating \$1.4 million of revenue, compared with 5.2 million passenger miles and \$2.4 million in revenue for all Northeast Corridor trains between Boston and Washington.

Amtrak also plans to reduce most long-distance trains to three-day-a-week service as of Oct. 1, according to an internal "Service Update." Amtrak Executive Vice President, Chief Marketing and Revenue Service Officer Roger Harris told employees that the goal would be "to restore daily service on these routes as demand warrants, potentially by the summer of 2021." *Auto Train*, which carries passengers and their cars between Lorton, Va., and Sanford, Fla., is the lone long-distance train which will continue to operate daily. Amtrak justifies the impending cutbacks to employees by claiming the reductions "will save as much as \$150 million [in fiscal 2021] vs. the losses that would have been incurred with daily service." He also asserts "low ridership on long-distance trains has significantly increased our operating losses, which exceeded \$500 million annually on these services before the pandemic."

SPECIAL EMPLOYEE ADVISORY

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Long Distance Business Line – Service Update

A Message from Roger Harris

To All Amtrak Employees,

We remain committed to operating a national network that serves our customers across America. However, we need to be smart about how we deliver our service in this market environment. Congress is not going to support us indefinitely to run mostly empty trains. We need to demonstrate that we are using our resources efficiently and responsibly.

Amtrak has made the decision to operate with reduced capacity through FY21. We are planning 32% fewer frequencies on the Northeast Corridor, 24% fewer for our state-supported service and plan to reduce most long-distance trains to three days per week, beginning October 1, 2020.

This is an appropriate response, given the current and near-term market conditions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our ridership has been down by as much as 95% year-over-year. It's climbing back slowly – and it is going to take a long time to return to normal. The demand for our Long Distance service is down by 70%, even as some U.S. states begin to reopen. We expect our systemwide ridership in Fiscal Year 2021 to be only 50% of what it was in 2019.

Low ridership on long-distance trains has significantly increased our operating losses, which already exceeded \$500 million annually on these services before the pandemic. We expect these long-distance frequency reductions will save as much as \$150 million in FY21 vs. the losses that would have been incurred with daily service. These savings are part of our pledge to Congress to reduce costs by \$500 million.

Our goal is to restore daily service on these routes as demand warrants, potentially by the summer of 2021.

We recognize these changes will impact our employees who support the Long Distance Service Line. While we have a broad plan on our FY21 service frequency, we still have work to do to determine how that will impact the employees who support this work. We are sensitive to the uncertainty that this announcement brings to our Long Distance team. We will work quickly to determine what staffing reductions or furloughs will occur, and we will communicate these changes to you as soon as possible.

A few additional points:

- The *Auto Train* is an exception to Amtrak's long-distance reduction plan and will continue its daily operation. The *Sunset Limited* and the *Cardinal* are currently tri-weekly and will remain tri-weekly. We expect to run the *Silver Meteor* four times a week so the stations that are common between it and the *Silver Star* have daily service.
- Amtrak remains concerned about the potential for a second wave of the pandemic in the fall, which could further impact demand across the system.
- Amtrak is developing specific and measurable metrics to guide our restoration of frequencies and service, and we will share those with you, Congressional staff and other stakeholders.

To ensure all stakeholders understand changes to our service, we will continue to communicate with our union leadership, our state partners, the federal government, the Rail Passengers Association, host railroads, our customers and you.

We appreciate your continued support as we work together to manage Amtrak through this difficult period.

Roger Harris
EVP, Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer



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

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