



THIS AMAZING 2020
POOPSHOW
IS FINALLY OVER
HAPPY NEW YEAR
2021!

From the President



Moving targets. It seems 2020 has been nothing but moving targets in every aspect of our lives. For the annual RPCA conference, we are no different. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the in-person gathering at the SAM Railroad due to circumstances beyond everyone's control.

With the help of Lynchpin Creative, we will be holding a virtual conference on April 17th and 18th that will include our general membership meeting. By pushing the date off until April, it buys us some more time in getting this year's conference right. This year's adventure will allow us to learn more about web-based options as this year's virtual conference will be based on donations and only for our members. If you don't have the cash, no excuses, stream it anyway. This could be the springboard to additional benefits associated with being a member of RPCA.

Regardless of web-based options, there is nothing like meeting in person. In 2022 we will gather in Cleveland for the first time since Albuquerque in

January of 2020. That will also be the alliance's 40th anniversary and just a stone's throw away from the origin, Bellevue, Ohio. In 12 months, we will be ready to meet and enjoy our success and learn from the failures.

As you stumble into a new year, let's keep a positive attitude as it appears we are finding our way out of the issues that kept us all locked down in 2020. We need to cheer for one another, even if it's just a phone call or assistance over the phone. To see closures of tourist operations or chartered cars no longer running is a loss to the industry. Let's keep them moving. We all look forward to getting back on the rails in 2021.

Be Safe My Friends,

W. Roger Fuehring



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

2021 Conference Update

Your Board of Directors has been working hard to offer something this year for our annual conference, while taking into consideration the ever-changing atmosphere of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been decided that we will offer an entirely virtual conference on **April 17th and 18th of 2021**. This two-day event will still showcase the same fundamental seminars that you depend on, including updates from Amtrak and the FRA, Umler, and the annual Membership meeting. Another important change is that this virtual conference will be **free** for current RPCA members, information about how to sign up will be released soon. Donations to help offset the production cost will be gratefully accepted.

We are currently seeking presenters who can fill out the rest of the schedule with “digital friendly” content. These presenters would work with our third-party technical advisors to host 45-minute long seminars with time for a live Q&A at the end. If you are interested in presenting or have any questions, please email judyclemgray@gmail.com as soon as possible.

We look forward to hosting you, digitally, on April 17th and 18th, stay tuned for more schedules and more information.

- RPCA Virtual Conference Committee

Insurance

Our insurance program renewal for 2021-22 is now completed. The Liability program premiums have increased about 20% at the first and second levels. The third level for 8+ moves has increased 36%. The Inland Marine (property) premiums increased 2%. Increases did not come as a surprise as many businesses and tourist railroads saw premiums increase anywhere from 40% to 100% this year depending on their insurer. We are delighted that the property insurance only increased 2%.

The addition of AAPRCO members to a strong RPCA program this past year has made an already great program even better. With the addition of the AAPRCO members, we also now have another strong agent participant in Assured Partners of Kansas City which will be managing all the AAPRCO members and advocating for those new RPCA members.

All agencies, McRail, HMBD, USIS and now Assured Partners have all the applications, rates, and instructions on how to facilitate their clients coverage in time for the normal renewal. They will be in touch with you in the coming weeks.

We wish to thank the staff at United Shortline Insurance Services for their hard work and dedication to this program. I wish to also thank the members who participate in the program for their help in reducing the claims so far this year. Keep up the great work.

- Tom Johnson

Reminder of Nomination and Election of Directors

Nominations of candidates for Director will end on January 18, 2021. Directors are elected for a three-year term beginning March 7 and ending at the Annual Members Meeting in 2024.

There are three seats up for election: those held by Judy Gray, Ray Kammer and Jon Clark. All have indicated they will seek reelection.

Please consider running for Director, particularly if you believe you have the talent or expertise to benefit our Alliance.

You may self-nominate or someone else may nominate you by contacting Burt Hermev, Vice President at cbhermey@pacbell.net or 714-264-9167.

Legislative



The \$2.3 trillion legislative package that includes \$1.4 trillion to fund the government and \$900 billion in coronavirus emergency relief aid, provides \$1 billion for Amtrak. The funding is designed to prevent, prepare for and respond to the pandemic, including \$655 million in grants for the Northeast Corridor and \$345 million in grants for Amtrak's national network.

"While this COVID funding is intended to be a temporary Band-Aid that will help Amtrak and our state and commuter partners, it is critical for minimizing negative impacts to our customers, employees and service between now and the end of March," said Amtrak Chief Executive Officer Bill Flynn in statement. Amtrak officials are looking forward to working with the next Congress and the Biden administration in 2021 on additional funding so that the railroad can restore service that was cut and bring back employees that were furloughed during the pandemic, as well as advance "vital" capital projects, Flynn added.

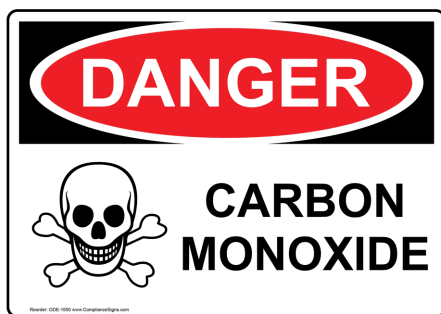
Pete Buttigieg has been nominated by president-elect Joe Biden to lead the U.S. Department of Transportation. Buttigieg served for eight years as mayor of South Bend, Ind., a city of about 100,000, crisscrossed by two busy freight railroads, a stop on two Amtrak long-distance routes and the eastern terminus of a commuter train to downtown Chicago. Buttigieg's nomination requires Senate confirmation. Amtrak Statement by Board Chairman Tony Coscia on the Nomination of Pete Buttigieg: "Amtrak is excited to work with Transportation Secretary designee Pete Buttigieg to launch an era of passenger rail expansion and improvement across the nation. President-elect Biden knows that rail investments will support economic recovery, expanded mobility, and carbon emissions reduction and we are looking forward to working with Mayor Buttigieg and the new Administration to advance these essential goals."

Democratic and Republican leadership of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will remain unchanged after Democrats elected Peter DeFazio (Ore.) as the committee chair and Republicans chose Sam Graves (Mo.) as the Ranking Member.

Amtrak Board Chair Anthony R. Coscia's term on the board has ended and the entire Amtrak Board now consists of individuals whose terms have expired. The law allows continued service until one's successor is confirmed. At this point no action is scheduled on the nominees who have been reported out of committee.

SAFETY

JANUARY NEEDS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR



I hope everyone had some time to enjoy a great Christmas with family and a safe New Year. By now, the vaccine against the virus is thundering along, with more doses on the horizon. The Holiday Trains are going into mothballs and plans are being made for necessary repairs and upgrades. All of us are looking forward to getting back to some semblance of normalcy in 2021.

Going to work during the winter months may require a heated shop area. It is in these shops, garages and other enclosed spaces that an increase in carbon monoxide (CO) deaths is seen. Carbon Monoxide is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas which replaces oxygen in the blood with CO. Over 400 deaths occur each year from CO poisoning.

Any heat source needs proper ventilation and CO can be produced by many sources such as engines, stoves, furnaces or even a charcoal grill. If your furnace, heater or

oil burning or coal burning stove is on the older side, a technician should look at it and tune it up if needed. Even using a cutting torch in a small space can produce CO.

Some of the symptoms of CO poisoning are: lightheadedness, dizziness, nausea or a dull headache. A bright red color seen in the lips may also be an indication of CO poisoning. Since this gas is so insidious, the onset of these symptoms may signal an immediate need to get medical care. Permanent brain damage or even death can occur so seek professional care right away.

There is good news though as battery operated CO monitors are readily available on the 'net for about \$20. There are clear instructions about proper placement and warning alarms included in the package. A couple of these inside a shop should help with a warning system. Proper venting of appliances or opening of windows for cross ventilation are also good practices.

These are but a few hints concerning this deadly gas. Familiarize yourself with CO while working indoors during these winter months. Take frequent breaks while stepping outside to grab some fresh January air. Until next time, stay warm, stay healthy and stay safe.

Gary Carter

UMLER REPORT



Just in time to be a Christmas "present"!

A new Umler Data Specification Manual dated 10 December 2020. New freight car rules that CAN affect passenger cars with freight valves:

Older type AB valves (AB, ABC, AB1C, etc): currently and still allowed 5 years (1840 days) if not serviced prior for other reasons must be Single Car Tested on the RIP first occasion. Since most PV owners don't have a "RIP" track, that is first occasion you are set up to do air work.

Newer type AB valves (ABDW, ABDX, ABDXL, DB60, DB60L): currently and still allowed 8 years (2944 days) if not serviced prior for other reasons must be Single Car Tested on the RIP first occasion. Ditto the comment about PV owners.

But here's what's new!! Mandatory removal and testing/repair after 13 years (4784 days)! Wow, almost sounds like freight valves are back to having a maximum allowable period between COT&S! What is old is new again, just with a very long period. But, we suggest that anyone with freight valves on their passenger cars should at least perform a single car test on that car at no more than every two years with full documentation, and if the test works out still passing but marginal, plan and schedule the maintenance/repair work for first next convenient time. Please don't try to stretch out the maintenance to save money, this is a safety concern, service the valves when they need it even if quite short of the regulated time period. And don't forget all the other valves, pistons and slack adjusters.

Also The type of Single Car Test Device is now a **MANDATORY** input on air brake tests. Don't know of any approved passenger automated yet, so only choice for passenger system is "Manual". Freight valves have that choice plus "Automatic" and "Automatic 4 port". RPCNB has been doing this for a couple years, but now everyone needs to.

There is data now showing that the automated test devices provide more accurate testing than the manual. As long as those new toys are kept in calibration, we can see that.

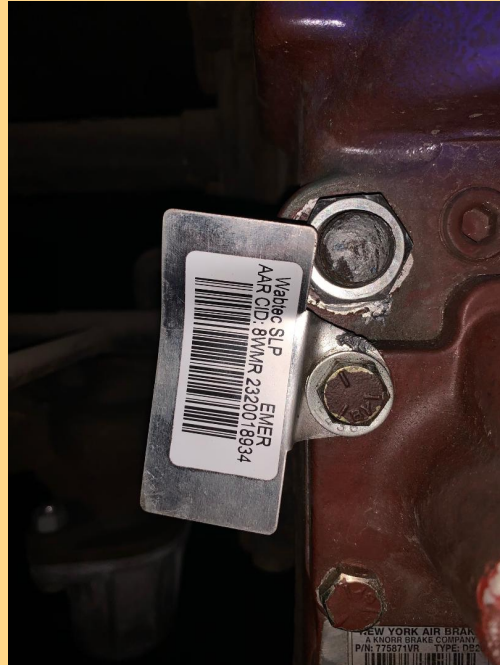
Component ID: we previously discussed how we can "associate" such identified components with passenger cars and locos. Is a PITA (pain in the a..) due to number of data fields and less than inherently obvious process. But with current rash of field failures of newer light weight brake valves, this is a safety feature that we should be using when we can. At least for now, not mandatory on passenger cars.

Here's a couple pictures of freight valves installed on a passenger car to show one version of shop ID presentation. In this case it is "tags" with a printed label on them and not just the printed stick on labels somewhere on the valve surface. Most axles, wheels, bearings couplers and draft gear have only printed "labels" affixed with such data, and those labels get unreadable quickly, so take pictures and/or copy the data somewhere safe.

Thanks to Eric Levin for such good clear pictures!



In the picture above, it appears the original NYAB tag is above the Wabtec tag and 90 degrees to it.



In the picture above, note that you can see the original maker's tag below right of the servicer's tag. This shows the valve model and part number. The serial number should be there also, just not visible in the picture. All of that data plus dates is required to "associate" this valve to a car.

Umler Summary

Here's how Umler stacks up with respect to Passenger car and Locomotive data fields just before Christmas:

Passenger: 150 total fields

- 20 mandatory fields (plus non-Umler fields RPCNB requires for identification)

- 33 computer generated fields (generated only by Umler computer)

- 117 data fields available for owner input

Locomotive: 299 total fields

- 41 mandatory fields (plus non-Umler fields RPCNB requires for identification)

- 16 computer generated fields (generated only by Umler computer)

- 283 data fields available for owner input

And more to come next year!!

What is RPCNB's fleet size? 160 cars and locos with another one in process.

Pamm & Dan hope you and yours have a very SAFE and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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

Trains and campaigns



Lordstown business owners George Bakeris and his brother, Spiro, commissioned a railcar to be painted to honor Trump. It is on the rails at Ohio Commerce Center in Lordstown. The brothers wanted to make people aware that they think the president has helped the area.



Presidential candidate Joe Biden's Build Back Better Express tour accelerates away from the trainshed of the Pittsburgh Amtrak station on Wednesday September 30, 2020. The tour launched in Cleveland, Ohio, with stops in Alliance, Ohio, Pittsburgh, Greensburg, Latrobe and Johnstown.

Jill Biden waves from the rear of Amtrak's American View as they depart from Pittsburgh.



Cars for sale

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is putting nine former Ringling Bros. and Banum & Bailey Circus cars on sale, along with seven other railcars it owns but decides it no longer needs. The agency bought the circus cars three years ago, thinking it might refurbish them for use on the state-supported Piedmont passenger trains. But the state has since received two federal grants

for a total of \$157 million that will allow it to buy new locomotives and cars. The cars are available on an auction page on the state's surplus property website; bids will be accepted through 10 a.m. on Jan. 4, 2021.

Great Lakes Railcar has ceased field operations. Due to this we have a large amount of tools, including a single car test device available for sale. For a full list of items, in Excel format email pamm@greatlakesrailcar.com.

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic is converting one of its coal-burning Denver & Rio Grande Western 2-8-2 locomotives to burn an oil-based fuel so that the railroad can continue to operate during dry conditions. 2-8-2 489 will be ready for the 2021 season. Interim CEO Eric Mason said the decision was based on changing environmental conditions in southwestern Colorado and northern New Mexico, where the C&TS operates. As summers in the region get dryer and hotter, the danger for wildfire is increasing, officials said, and 489 will

enable them to operate safely during more extreme conditions. However, the railroad plans on maintaining its other coal-burning locomotives.

A Union Pacific 0-6-0 locomotive has been moved from a city park in Evanston, Wyo., to a restored roundhouse that will become its new home. Plans call for the locomotive to eventually be put inside away from the elements.

Denver & Rio Grande Western 2-8-0 315 is expected to receive a 15-year overhaul at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic next winter and will stay on the narrow gauge railroad until at least 2025. This year, the owners of the locomotive, the Durango Railroad Historical Society, have been raising money for the eventual restoration. DRHS volunteers will assist C&TS employees with the overhaul over the winter of 2021 and 2022.

U.S. Sugar volunteers, joined by members of the U.S. Marine Corps and local representatives from Toys for Tots, operated its 4-6-2, No. 148, as the "Santa Express" from U.S. Sugar's Clewiston, Fla., headquarters, delivering presents for children of the Florida Glades farming communities and highlighting support organizations such as Toys for Tots.

The Durbin & Greenbrier Valley has begun work on the Trout Run Bridge project, the final step in restoring rail service between Cass and Durbin, W.Va., for the first time since 1985. Equipment, which can only be moved by rail to the remote location, is now being staged for work on the Cass side. To reach the opposite side of the bridge, 100 feet away, the equipment must be transported 15 miles by rail and 19 by road. While drilling and foundation work is being completed on the Cass end of the bridge, another crew will be building forms for the abutment on the Durbin end.

Regularly scheduled tourist passenger service is set to resume on the East Broad Top Railroad for the first time since the historic narrow-gauge line shut down in 2011. This will occur in May or June 2021 "with or without steam (locomotives)" said Brad Esposito, the railroad's general manager. Train frequency and days of operation have yet to be determined. The Pennsylvania Office of the Budget has awarded a \$1.4 million economic development grant to the nonprofit EBT Foundation. Funding will be applied to several projects, among them retiring part of a mortgage held by the previous owner as well as plans for proposed construction and rehabilitation of facilities.

Amtrak/Freight/Federal Agencies



Stephen Gardner was appointed Amtrak President. The appointment is part of a broader set of actions that Amtrak says will ensure the railroad is well positioned for success in fiscal year 2021 and beyond. As President, Gardner will drive the company's effort to regain and grow customers and partners through strong delivery of Amtrak's Annual Operating Plan and modernization of Amtrak's products, services, infrastructure and fleet. Overseeing Marketing, Operations, Planning and Asset Development, and Government Affairs and Corporate Communications, Gardner will lead day-to-day operations and advance Amtrak's long-term goals. Gardner currently serves as Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Operating and Commercial Officer. Since coming to Amtrak in 2009, Gardner has been responsible for efforts to expand state-supported service partnerships, advance significant equipment procurements, improve Northeast Corridor infrastructure, formulate policies to carry out Amtrak's strategic plan, and guide general development and planning activities.

Prior to Amtrak, Gardner worked on rail and transportation policy for the U.S. Senate's Co