



## FROM THE PRESIDENT



What's in a reporting mark? It's not that difficult to spray some letters and numbers on, right? As stated on our website: The process of registering, reporting marks, and maintaining all your car information can be a daunting job. Recognizing this, the RPCA created the Railroad Passenger Car Numbering Bureau as a service to our members. The RPCNB is an arm of the RPCA organization and is dedicated to maintaining all the data on our member's cars under the RPCA reporting marks of RPCX. The RPCNB is managed by RPCA member Great Lakes Railcar.

Great Lakes Railcar is our one and only Pamm & Dan Monaghan. The two of them do an incredible job on our behalf. It takes someone very patient to handle the amount of detail that has gone into the movement of so many pieces of equipment. If you look on the various websites that feature private cars, you see pictures dating back many years that carried our marks. Not just passenger cars but many locomotives, boxcars, and some unusual equipment have displayed

the RPCX mark. FYI: If your equipment still carries our mark (RPCX) and it's not registered, please remove the mark until you resolve the issue with Pamm or Dan of the RPCNB.

As time marches on, it's time we start training someone to assist and eventually take over for Pamm & Dan. It's not a short process as there is a lot to learn. There is a significant amount of time needed, but it can be rewarding once you're up and running. If interested, go to the website at <http://www.rpcnb.com/> and reach out to them through their contact information.

We are looking for memories from that first conference in Bellevue in 1983. Were you there or know of some stories? Have any pictures of that year in Bellevue? How about any of those early years? Feel free to share them. You can send them to my email at [wwrogerf@aol.com](mailto:wwrogerf@aol.com).

Joe Rosenthal is working hard to get our print magazine out. He does a great job. If you want to advertise or have an article, it might not be too late to reach out to him to make the next issue.

Are you saving the date? January 14-16, 2022 is approaching quickly. We are still working with our sponsoring group to get the info out as soon as possible for this year's conference. Getting everything cranked back up takes a little more time than usual. Rest assured, Midwest Railway Preservation promises to put on a good show with our traditional programs and some new ones. We will see you there.

Be Safe My Friends,

**W. Roger Fuehring**

President, RPCA

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS



### NOMINATIONS FOR DIRECTOR

The window for nominations for Director are open now through December 2.

Directors will serve a term of three years. Normally, directors meet in person twice per year—at the General Meeting, usually held in January, and mid-year. The midyear meeting is frequently held in the locale of the upcoming Annual Conference. A stipend of up to \$500 to help defray travel and hotel expenses is payable to board attendees for the midyear

meeting. There is no stipend associated with the Annual Conference.

In addition, special meetings of the board may be called, as well as votes that may be needed on more urgent issues. These would most likely be teleconferences or perhaps email.

The Alliance's By-laws establish the rules for nomination. If you need a copy, please contact me at [cbhermey@pacbell.net](mailto:cbhermey@pacbell.net) and I'll forward one to you.

Become an engaged member and throw your hat in the ring!

## AMTRAK



### RPCA-AMTRAK CONFERENCE CALL

FRIDAY AUGUST 27, 2021 1:00PM-2:00PM (E.S.T)

For Amtrak:  
Mike DeAngelo  
Robert Ripperger  
Teresa Smith  
For RPCA:  
Mike Stickel  
Burt Hermey  
Brad Black

1. Amtrak Overview

Revenue, Ridership, -65% vs 2019  
LDT Revenue -40% Ridership -50%  
cancellations up due to latest surge  
2. Private Car Business Update  
business good due to AAPRCO special  
30 move requests for Sept  
19 move requests for Oct  
PV moves -20% vs FY 2019  
Inspection requests increasing.

### Attention car owners!

The desire to travel is really picking up again...particularly on less crowded modes of transportation. As part of our new website, there is a listing of cars for charter. You can easily join the other 9 cars listed on the site and pick up some business. Inquiries are forwarded to us from Amtrak, as well as from other RPCA members who have been contacted. It only takes a few minutes to tell your car's story and select a representative photo.

RPCA Website Committee member Eric Payne is updating the list now. RPCA members can contact Eric at [fipaynerpca@gmail.com](mailto:fipaynerpca@gmail.com) or at 443-600-4810. It's time to get rolling again.

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION



### LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Ross Capon has been advocating for passenger rail, and for private cars, for over four decades, first with NARP, and more lately as an independent lobbyist. He is AAPRCO's Washington Representative.

Ross focuses his attention on Senators and Representatives whose committees have oversight over Amtrak.

Periodically, Ross will contact people in RPCA and AAPRCO who have expressed a willingness to donate to fundraisers held by movers and shakers in those committees who are pro-passenger rail. On our behalf he advocates for language favorable to private car operations as passenger rail in general to these people.

He is also a valuable resource for those who might wish to get in touch with their congress members about passenger rail and private cars.

### Political Fundraisers

Ross Capon

The appearance of private-car/charter-train interests at fund-raisers began in 2017 and 2018 when Bob Donnelley, then AAPRCO president, generously wrote all the checks. He hoped this would encourage others to join the effort, and this has been the case.

In 2020, I attended 15 fund-raisers for key Senators and Representatives, generally the chair or ranking member of the authorization and appropriations committees with Amtrak jurisdiction. The 18 donors were members of AAPRCO, Friends of the 261 (<https://261.com/>) and RPCA. Individual checks ranged from \$50 to \$500; events cost from \$250 to \$1,000. The number of lobbyists present ranged from about five to twenty. Except for the rail labor reps at a few events, I was the only pro-passenger-rail lobbyist at these fund-raisers.

Beginning in mid-March, 2020, most events were on Zoom, which has the advantage that I could see the name (and usually affiliation) of everyone who is talking. I use my speaking opportunity both to support Amtrak, especially the national network, and a return to policies more favorable towards private cars, charter trains and thus Amtrak's own bottom line.

If you have not written checks and might consider doing so, or would like more information, please contact me at [rcapon3@gmail.com](mailto:rcapon3@gmail.com) If you like, I can add you to the list of people I notify when a relevant fund-raiser is coming up. This does not entail any obligation to write a check. You have complete control over who gets your money -- checks always are payable to a specific campaign. Thus, you can avoid - or favor - any legislator you particularly like or dislike. Checks must be personal checks, not corporate.

### Legislation

The Senate passed a bipartisan \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill by a 69-30 vote, which includes \$550 billion for transportation. It includes a guaranteed \$66 billion investment in passenger rail over the next five years. The Senate also passed a much larger budget resolution by a party line vote. The budget resolution provides an additional \$60 billion for the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure and \$83 billion for the Senate Committee on Science over the next five years. Only projects and programs not included in the bipartisan infrastructure deal will be eligible. The action will now move to the House of Representatives, where a vote will have to wait until September, when the chamber returns from recess.

# SAFETY



## PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING

The calendar says that September is National Preparedness Month. Seems reasonable to me. Time to step back and survey what is planned for the fall and winter months ahead. September's weather is usually mild and we can still get many things accomplished that were on the "To Do" list earlier in the year.

There is so much to review as we plan for fall excursions, Halloween trains and treats and that granddaddy of them all, the North Pole Mainline. Now is the time to get staff lined up for any training which

may be needed from an operational standpoint. Don't wait until the weekend of Thanksgiving to start staff training and safety programs. Fire up the consist and make a couple of dry runs, reviewing what is expected of volunteers.

What safety measures are going to be in place for the upcoming events? Snow shovels, de-icing salt for the platforms, warming cars, and passenger assistance all come into play. Slips, trips and falls are still preventable actions when it comes to the public accessing our equipment. Not only is there the safety side, but what will make the whole experience more enjoyable for families?

There are still lingering questions about this crazy virus we are battling. What is going to be your "official" policy in dealing with virus as it relates to the boarding public. Are you going to require proof of vaccination? Masks while on the property? These decisions are entirely up to you. However, with so many states, counties, cities and everyone else implementing C-19 requirements, the public is confused, myself included. In this day of social media and websites, if you do nothing else, please post what your requirements are going to be regarding the virus.

Planning and prepping are key to a safe and successful fall and holiday season. Take or make the time to get everyone on the same page as to expectations, safety policies and operational policies. Let our passengers know in advance what is expected of them when they board that Santa Special. In the meantime, I will continue to try and figure out when and where I am supposed to wear the mask and how to social distance. The one thing I do know how to do is to wash my hands. So, pass the soap and let me do my best.

Gary Carter

# UMLER REPORT



## Why are people having trouble getting cars or locos they bought into Umler?

This falls into one of those "are we having fun yet" frustrations or functionally a PITA (Pain In The A\*\*).

Many reasons, some sound, some less so. Whether you do your Umler work yourself, or have someone do it for you, you need to understand what is needed to make the process work. In simplest terms, correct data,

and by correct we mean what the Umler computer thinks is correct. Reality doesn't count.

**Need some definitions here to understand the game.**

Source: the car or loco that is being re-stenciled or cloned FROM.

Target: the reporting mark and number you want the source to become. Does NOT have to be identical to the source.

Conflict: a computer recognized error in the record. Can be things like over age, or many other reasons and/or any missing mandatory field(s). This last one is causing many, many problems right now. Many new fields on locos have never been input for older records, therefore the record has conflicts.

**Causal Issues:**

Incorrect reporting mark and number of source. If the computer doesn't notify immediately "does not exist in system", you will probably be using the wrong record. An example of this is a PV with Amtrak 800 number, but is registered in Umler under a different number. Inputting the 800 number gets you nowhere.

Incomplete or duplicate reporting mark and number of target. Yup, happens.

Source has "conflicts". The Umler computer will NOT allow a re-stencil or clone from a source with conflicts. There is a long on-going story here about this with Railinc.

For re-stencil: incorrect input of build date (to the day) as source and new owner's mark will not validate.

Not correctly completing any mandatory fields that don't carry over for the clone.

**What can be done?**

If you can NOT get the Umler maintainer for the SOURCE to correct the conflicts, you are between a rock and a hard spot.

This has been an issue with Amtrak auctioned cars for years now, and now with the IPH bankruptcy the MH, SLRG and SNC records can be a problem. Nobody is going to correct the source conflicts to allow a re-stencil.

Unless you have authorized access to the source reporting mark you can do NOTHING. You must build the new record from scratch, or clone a sister car or loco that does NOT have conflicts into what you need, and do NOT attempt to input the prior mark and number because it won't be accepted.

**Looking for cars or locos?**

If you are looking for a specific IPH car or loco, you will probably find it still under MH, SLRG or SNC, but if the car or loco was used as collateral on the IPH loan, most have already been created under the finance company's reporting mark, and you need to buy it from them. All the other equipment processes through the bankruptcy trustee.

If someone is looking for a car that Phil Sheridan owned, some are for sale on the Ozark web site. Many of the total he owned are not. Some were transferred to the Great Lakes Railcar reporting mark, others weren't. If the car you want is on the Ozark site, work through John. If it is not, email or call us and we'll get you connected with the proper people.

Take care, stay safe.

Pamm & Dan

## 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.**

## Museum and Excursion Trains



Western Maryland Scenic Railroad 2-6-6-2 No. 1309 will operate for Polar Express rides in December. The former Chesapeake & Ohio locomotive, the last Baldwin built for domestic operation, made its first run under steam at the end of 2020 but some work remained to be done at the time. Wesley Heinz, who had been executive director on an interim basis, has been appointed to the job now by the board of directors. His background in preservation, fundraising, and marketing includes his previous position as executive director at the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum in Portland, Maine.

The Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum has added a rare Fairbanks-Morse locomotive to its collection thanks to a donation from the Tennessee Valley Authority. The H16-66 "Baby Trainmaster", built in 1958, is one of the few surviving Fairbanks-Morse locomotives, and one of less than 1,500 produced by Fairbanks-Morse before the company exited the locomotive business in 1963. It spent its entire working life at the TVA's Gallatin power plant near Gallatin, Tenn., until its retirement in 1997.

With COVID-19 cases increasing, the Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad has cancelled its Polar Express holiday trains for the second consecutive year. Because it is very up close and personal with children, organizers felt they would be remiss if they were the cause of an increase in infections. The event is a major attraction for the railroad and for Randolph County, W.Va.

A small 0-6-0 steam locomotive will be headlining Kentucky Steam Heritage's Ravenna Railroad Festival on September 11. Lehigh Valley Coal Company 126 will be leading short excursions through Kentucky Steam's property. Although steam is in the group's name, this is the first time Kentucky Steam has put on an event with live steam power. Lehigh Valley Coal 126 is owned by the Grammling Family of Indiana and was built by Vulcan in 1931.

Three former Great Northern Railway passenger cars that were left abandoned in Mississippi have found a new home in Florida on U.S. Sugar's growing tourist operation. Sugar Express purchased three passenger cars from the United Railroad Historical Society of New Jersey for use on a future tourist train. The cars, two built for the GN and one built for the Union Pacific (although later sold to GN), were part of the URHS collection and were leased to Iowa Pacific, which abandoned them in Mississippi. The cars will be restored and eventually hauled by Florida East Coast 4-6-2 148, which was restored to steam last year, and Atlantic Coast Line 4-6-2 1504.

The Southern Appalachia Railway Museum has acquired the last passenger car needed to restore the Central of Georgia's Man o' War pocket streamliner. The group believes it is the first time that a non-articulated, standard gauge train set has been brought together like this in the preservation era. The Man o' War was a four-car passenger train that ran twice daily from Atlanta to Columbus, Georgia, starting in 1947. The fourth and final car has been acquired from the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad. It and the observation car will be restored to service and then all four cars will be put back into their original configuration.

The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. and Museum plans to restore two more of its 2-foot gauge steam locomotives to operating condition, in addition to two currently in service. The two engines to be restored were on display last month, bringing together all five remaining 2-foot-gauge Maine steamers.

## Amtrak/Freight/Federal Agencies



Amtrak has fully restored Coast Starlight service operating daily between Los Angeles and Seattle following several weeks of service interruption resulting from extensive wildfire damage in Northern California. With infrastructure repairs now completed, customers can leverage Amtrak's train service to travel up and down the California coast, passing through Santa Barbara, the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, and Portland making full Coast Starlight service available for the upcoming Labor Day holiday period.

The Surface Transportation Board has taken a number of actions. The STB has selected a senior staff member, Neil Moyer, to coordinate the board's efforts in preparing to meet new intercity passenger rail on-time performance responsibilities. Moyer will work closely with board members and staff to develop a plan for on-time performance investigations. Among the tasks: Forming a unit at the STB focused on passenger rail issues and analysis. In his role as passenger rail unit development coordinator, Moyer's work will build on that of the Passenger Rail Working Group, an interdisciplinary group of board employees formed in April to evaluate the resources the board needs to fulfill its on-time performance oversight responsibilities.

The STB also agreed with Amtrak's request for expedited hearings to determine what, if any, infrastructure improvements must occur before it can begin operating between New Orleans and Mobile, Ala. Amtrak had sought to start two daily round trips along the Norfolk Southern-CSX Transportation route in January 2022. The STB's schedule for discovery, rebuttal, and proposals for a hearing format will conclude Dec. 16, so hearings may not begin until January, and a decision would only be finalized after that. If the STB decides capacity upgrades are necessary before service can start, those would have to be constructed. The STB ruling rejects the host railroads' argument that the entire process should be delayed until environmental reviews are undertaken. The board has ruled Metra must pay Amtrak \$10.7 million annually for use of Chicago Union Station while declining to address a number of key operating issues which remain in dispute. The STB ruled on costs in three areas — ground-power charges, station operations and maintenance, and policing — after Amtrak and Metra had previously agreed on costs for dispatching and maintenance-of-way. The total figure for STB-ordered compensation in those five areas is \$10,673,743; Amtrak had sought \$14,794,407, while Metra had offered \$6,740,566.

The Federal Railroad Administration has announced it will make available almost \$362 million for rail projects through its Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements, or CRISI, grant program. The funding is for projects that reduce congestion, improve shortline and regional rail infrastructure, relocate rail lines or improve multi-modal coordination at locations such as ports or intermodal facilities. Applicants need to address necessity, accountability, racial equity, and climate change. The FRA will hold a webinar about the CRISI funding on Sept. 21; information is available at [this page of the FRA website](#).

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