

INFORMATION PASSENGER CAR EXCHANGE

RAILROAD ALLIANCE

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Memorial Day weekend is behind us and the 2022 summer season is now in full swing. We are in the midst of times that most of us haven't seen before. High gas prices, inflation, and various supply chain shortages make for some "out-of-the-box" marketing challenges. Everyone's ridership doesn't appear to be down at this point, but concerns about continuing inflation are in the back of our minds. We had issues similar to what we are currently going through in the mid-70s.

In the 1970s, many of our passenger cars and locomotives found their way into private hands. Amtrak was retiring cars rapidly, and railroads started shedding some of their first generation of diesel locomotives. By the early 80s, passenger cars and early generation locomotives were at fire-sale prices. Most of the equipment that we operate today came from those lean years that we had in this country.

Equipment sold at that time didn't have much to do with the economy as it was related to the age of the equipment; however, the economy did help set the price for said equipment. Several pieces that are operating today were sold at scrap value. The condition of equipment was in various forms. In some cases, they were in running condition, and in others, not so much. I can remember one GP9 locomotive in excellent condition sold from a class one railroad for \$9,000.00. What did it take to put into service? Just a flash of the voltage regulator field, and we were running. A few days later, we put in a second-hand regulator for which we paid \$25.00, so we didn't have to flash the field each time we fired it up. I know of some

cases of Amtrak cars where we put the knife switch up, and we were up and running off the storage batteries. In one case, I ate in a diner in the late '70s on my way to Florida on a family trip, only to have the car in the museum in Bellevue on display just a few years later. It is still displayed today and used for "dinner in the diner" fundraisers.

On the locomotive side, we see that same pattern repeating itself. A few years ago, it was hard to find an SD40-2 for \$250,000. Last year, one scrapper had several runners, your choice, for \$85,000.00. Newer locomotives are coming on the market to the point that we are seeing several locomotives going to scrap that would have brought a pretty penny just a few years ago. Sound familiar? They say history has a way of repeating itself.

If history is a guideline for what's ahead, we might have a few more years of economic downturn. No one knows where the bottom is, considering world events, politics, and everything in between. We know that many museums and operations made it through the downturn of the 70s. In some cases, many operations got their start in those trying times. Survival is what we do so well. If there is one thing we are good at, it's stretching a dollar.

With lean times comes an increase in theft and vandalism. I recently visited one class one railroad that had a locomotive with catastrophic damage from copper theft. The thieves unbolted the high voltage leads from the main locker behind the cab. They then went into the main generator room and cut every high voltage lead off the main generator to the locker and floor. While they were at it, they grabbed some low-voltage wiring on the way out. The damage I witnessed could be done behind the closed doors of the locomotive in less than an hour. What was the cost? The cost of all the repairs exceeds the value of the locomotive.

It was a harsh reminder to take those extra measures to protect your equipment. The damage that I saw could have taken place anywhere. You can have the best-protected area, but the damage could already be done within a few minutes before you know it. We all have stories of thinking our equipment was safe, only to fall into the hands of someone with sinister motives.

A week ago, I was reminded during a conversation of some effective security steps that I still do for our private car. It is a practice that I've been doing since 2007. Our car is parked at the bumper of a small downtown area on the main street. The siding ends at the sidewalk and is across from the post office and the town hall. Three local bars on that street and a Mexican restaurant create a lot of foot traffic in the evenings. While in a title office a week ago, a relator had mentioned that I must have her picture after she found out that we own the passenger car in the little town of Lapel, Indiana. I asked, "Why would I have your picture." She answered, "When she and her husband climbed up in the vestibule to look in the door window, an alarm went off, and a small red light on a ceiling-mounted camera flashed inside the car." My 15-year-old driveway sensor mounted inside the intake screen in the vestibule ceiling sent a signal to the alarm tone box inside the car. The camera is also 15 years old and a fake that flashes a red light every 10 seconds. The total cost back then was less than \$20.00 plus changing the batteries out every 6-months. I just checked the price on Harbor Freight Tool for both items, and it is still the same price.

What does my \$20.00 plus batteries buy you and me? Lower insurance rates. Take the extra steps and protect your equipment. We have to protect those dollars and stretch them in these lean times. Security of our equipment will save us all from higher insurance rates and downtime. If they can hit a class one railroad in an active rail yard, most of our equipment are easy targets.

W. Roger Fuehring

President, RPCA

MEMBERSHIP NEWS



you get a lot for your money:

- Dedication to serving private railroad equipment owners & operators.
- A slick, full-color magazine with articles and news of interest to all railfans
- A monthly e-newsletter with the latest information on tourist trains, steam, museums, and private varnish
- Ability to attend an annual convention that features hands-on mechanical workshops, marketing information, the latest from Amtrak and the FRA, special train rides, trade show, banquet and networking.
- Insurance administered through [McCarthy Rail Insurance Managers](#), [United Shortline Insurance](#), [Assured Partners of Missouri & Hamman-Miller-Beauchamp-Deeble](#), providing members with an economical source of liability and physical damage coverage.
- Umler recording and assistance
- Scholarship and mentoring for youth interested in railroading as a career or as volunteers
- Supporter of Rail Camp for youth
- Safety training and safety manual
- Mechanical/Technical Group (MTAG) for guidance with mechanical issues

BOARD MEETING

The summer Board meeting will be held Saturday, August 20th in Spencer North Carolina. Board members will tour the hotels and sites that will be used for the conference in January. The Board meeting proper will start around 10 am in the North Carolina Transportation Museum

DUES

Dues renewal letters have gone out. Your dues will be delinquent on June 30th. Dues are only 45 dollars, and

- The Cab Unit Preservation Society (C.U.P.S.), an RPCA group dedicated to the preservation and operation of historic cab unit locomotives
- Rental of the single-car test device and wheel gauge calibration

Make check payable to RPCA or renew online at JoinRPCA@rpca.com. You can mail it to :

RPCA Membership

P.O. Box 67

Cordele, GA 31010

Do not enclose payment to RPCNB. That will be billed separately.

Please check your data to make sure it is correct.

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

SAFETY



Sparks Fly

We are down to a couple of items on our punch list before our car is ready for the big rails. I have been struggling with the design of the general toilet and shower. These two rooms are going into side-by-side closets and will require cutting out a steel partition and welding in some struts for the stainless steel shower. In addition to this, we are installing a holding tank directly below the general toilet. While these may seem like straight forward, "Get 'er Done" type of things, I have some anxiety over these projects. We are working in a forward corner of the car. This corner has a scary history of sparks causing the smoldering of

insulation in the floor and side wall. I don't mean once or twice, but this corner has seen three instances of spark and/or welding caused insulation smoldering. We are so close to having this car ready that my fear is hampering the work.

The West has been under strict fire restrictions for almost two months. In addition, the wind has been horrendous, with gusts in the 70 to 80 MPH neighborhood. Relative humidities have been running in the single digits. This has slowed the work under the car in hanging the holding tank.

So, based on the environmental conditions and the history of the interior, I feel my fears are not without merit. As for the work under the car, my plan is to seal up with spark shield and caulk as much as possible. Plug all of the holes and use a welding blanket if needed. We will clear out all of the combustibles on the ground under the car and cover the ties with a layer of dirt. If the hose reaches that far we will have it on standby with two fire extinguishers ready for immediate use. I hope to apply some of the same fire prevention tricks to the interior work. Seal off any access to the side walls and floor by draping welding blankets or installing the necessary sheet metal, which would be needed anyway. Sparks could be minimized by using a Sawzall or rotary cutter to remove interior metal.

Forethought and patience are in order for these projects. It only takes one spark to get things rolling. Preplanning and a good defense will go a long way to keep the danger of fire at bay. I know things do not always work out even with the best planning, so some sort of fire suppression should be immediately available. Wish us luck, and keep those hands clean!

Gary Carter

PARTS PLACE

Looking for:

Have a customer looking for some heavy duty flat cars for intra-plant movements. Being for intra-plant, they can be over age. At least 60 foot load deck, 100 ton plus would be nice. If you have any or know of any, please contact us. Thank you.

UMLER



Reminder!

For those who have not renewed their reporting mark use subscription, we must have it in our hands by the close of business (figure 6 pm) on June 30 because after June 30 we delete all rolling stock that has not been renewed. This is to avoid paying Railinc charges on all rolling stock in the system as of July 1.

That means if you are mailing a check, it must be in the POBox by the time we make our last trip to the Post Office on June 30. If it doesn't arrive at the Post Office before 9

am, it won't get put into the PO Box until the next day. With the service times we've seen lately from the USPS, plan on mailing the check, renewal form, and insurance cert no later than June 20.

I haven't raised the renewal fee; it's still \$65 per car up to 5 then a decreasing amount for more. Want to save money, then buy more cars 😊 You can renew by mailing a check, we prefer using a credit card. We can send you a Square Invoice so that you can handle the payment online, or you can call us, and we'll handle it over the phone.

Don't forget that all renewals require the insurance cert with RPCNB identified as "Additional Insured." And of course your money.

We are about 1/2 way through the renewal period, and we've gotten about 1/2 of the fleet renewed! FANTASTIC!!! Thank you all who have expediently processed their renewals.

If you aren't going to renew, please let us know. That way, we don't worry about you. If you are having some difficulty renewing, please talk to us.

CATS! Need to get your re-certifications in to us. Thank you very much to those of you who send copies of your cards with the air test data.

Umler:

The system is slowly but surely being migrated to the cloud. This is supposed to make things easier and simpler for Railinc. So what is "the Cloud"?

Although talked up as some magical celestial computer system, you will get different answers depending on whom you ask. Simplest answer is that it is someone's gigantic rack server in a central location served by "secure" connections that you pay a fee to access. The operative term here is "secure." For big operations, these connections can be "T1" lines, i.e., dedicated high-speed communications cables. Very difficult to hack externally. We are too small to afford that; we must use the internet. And we've all heard stories about the security of the internet.

Our concern is the number of hacks of cloud-based data systems that have occurred and been publicized. There were many more that weren't publicized. If the Railinc cloud data gets hacked, that could theoretically shut down the entire rail system until it is rebuilt, at the very least causing disruptions in car movements because of lack of Umler data.

The plan is first to have sufficient security NOT to allow a hack. But, if the online data base gets hacked, they clear it and reload from an existing recent backup. The potential problem is that if you did some Umler work after that backup was made, your work is lost, and you will have to put it back in again. That has happened to us several times, fortunately much less often lately. Good things we keep backups, eh?

DDCT was migrated to the cloud on the 17th.

If you are performing Umler work, you need to sign in at least every 90 days to keep your access active. Once it is revoked for lack of use, it is a PITA to get back.

And when you get an email requesting authorization to renew an existing LOA (which happens every year) or approve a new LOA (required after the term of the initial LOA expires nominally 3 years), you must answer that within 2 weeks, or it is automatically denied, and all access for the entity performing your work is canceled. That means if you still want that entity to continue performing your work, a new LOA process must be started.

This can be a real PITA for groups who change the responsible party and don't properly notify Railinc or RPCNB also if the responsible party changes email addresses.

Take care, and stay safe.

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.

Museum and Excursion Trains



The North Carolina Railway Museum orchestrated a 4-day, 5-mile highway movement of 10 landlocked railroad cars — both passenger and freight — from a nuclear power plant site to its headquarters. The cars were the subject of NCRM's "Save the Ten" campaign. Many of the cars are weathered and more than 100 years old. According to the museum, some are the last surviving relics of their kind, but all are in solid condition and salvageable. The highlight of the group is "Calais," a Pullman sleeper built in 1916. The other heavyweight cars are an Atlantic Coast Line Baggage-Express car and a former Pullman baggage/Railway Post Office car.

One of just two RS1325 locomotives built by EMD, which had been in danger of being scrapped, may be saved. Former Chicago & Illinois Midland No. 30 has been at North Carolina's Atlantic & Western Railway since June 2016, but the unit was reportedly to be scrapped. The Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Ill., indicated an interest in the unit. The locomotive was used on the 19-mile Genesee & Wyoming line based in Sanford, N.C., and the railroad is willing to delay the disposition of the unit.

Last month, the Pullman Historic Foundation's "Railroad Days 2022" was held at Chicago's Pullman National Monument. It featured tours of railcars built at the factory before it closed in 1981, including some RPCA members' cars. Streamlined stainless-steel sheathed observation Royal Street and two heavyweight business cars: New York Central No. 3 and the Francis L. Suter, built for the Pennsylvania Railroad at the Pullman plant in 1914, were on display.

Railroading Heritage of Midwest America will restore the tender for Union Pacific Big Boy No. 4014; This will allow the Big Boy's current tender to be rejoined with its original locomotive, Challenger No. 3985, which the RRHMA is planning to restore. Steve Sandberg, president, and chief operating officer of RRHMA, says the tender project is part of a separate agreement with UP, which last month donated the Challenger, a 2-10-2, and other equipment to the Midwest group.

Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad has opened its scenic bed and breakfast and dinner trains after being closed to passenger operations for 784 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The popular scenic train operates over two former Chicago & North Western Railway lines in Northwest Wisconsin, based out of Trego, just north of the former division headquarters in Spooner. The tourist railroad undertook numerous projects to keep its workforce employed during the pandemic, including working on equipment and a major track rehabilitation covering nearly two miles of line.

Kalmbach Media Co. has named veteran railroad editor and journalist Carl A. Swanson as the new editor of TRAINS. Swanson succeeds the late Jim Wrinn, who died March 30, 2022, and served as editor for more than 17 years. Swanson joins the TRAINS staff from MODEL RAILROADER, where he served as editor for the past three years. Swanson is also the author of "Faces of Railroading," a deluxe pictorial tribute to the people of railroading.

A plaque added to the cab of Western Maryland Scenic Railroad 2-6-6-2 No. 1309 honors the contributions of late Trains editor Jim Wrinn to both the restoration of that locomotive and rail preservation in general. It reads: "In memory of Jim Wrinn, 1961-2022. This locomotive would not be in operation without his efforts, support, and enthusiasm. He will forever be a member of every crew that occupies this cab. Wrinn was instrumental in the selection of the 1309 restoration project as Trains' first "preservation partner,"

The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge temporarily suspended operations in May because of fire danger. That reflects new operating rules the railroad agreed to as part of a settlement with the federal government earlier this year. The suspension was based on the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management raising their fire precaution rating to its highest level. The railroad agreed to the rule as part of a March settlement over the railroad's role in the 416 fire, a 2018 wildfire that burned more than 54,000 acres.

The new mayor of Eatonville, Wash., has started an effort to revive the Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad. He recently detailed steps being taken to get the railroad back on track under the auspices of a newly reconstituted Western Industrial Forestry Museum, including an expected June closing on the transfer of all railroad assets to the revived non-profit museum. The railroad was shut down by its current owner, American Heritage Railroads (which also owns Durango & Silverton), in May 2020. There are eight steam locomotives and a handful of diesels in the collection, including a former Northern Pacific F-unit and Great Northern NW2.

Amtrak/Freight/Federal Agencies



President Biden announced his intent to nominate 5 members to the AMTRAK Board of Directors: Anthony Coscia has been on the board since 2010 and was elected as its chairman in 2013. He would be joined by Christopher Koos, mayor of Normal, Ill.; David Capozzi, former executive director of the U.S. Access Board; Samuel Lathem, retired Delaware State AFL-CIO president; and Robin Wiessmann, executive director and chief executive of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. The 10-member board also includes Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner. Senate Republicans can select the other three nominees.

With demand for travel steadily returning, Amtrak has announced that it will return four long-distance trains to daily service in May, return Northeast Regional frequencies to nearly 80% of pre-pandemic service levels, and restore additional service on two State-supported corridors. The railroad will also bring additional Acela frequencies online. The City of New Orleans and Crescent will remain at five days per week, and the Silver Meteor is still missing in action, with a patchwork bridge-service provided by the Silver Star and Palmetto. Amtrak expects to be able to announce additional service for summer travel later this spring.

According to the FRA, not a single Amtrak long-distance train met the new regulatory standard for Customer On-Time Performance during the first quarter of Fiscal 2022, while freight-train interference grew 12 percent over the previous quarter and remained the biggest single contributor to late trains. This is the first report with a complete set of figures and, therefore, the first complete look at performance as the rule-makers intended. The report covers on-time performance, train delay minutes, Amtrak's financial performance, customer satisfaction scores by route, data on stations, and figures measuring public benefits such as the levels of service to underserved communities, the number of missed connections, the degree to which routes connect other communities, and how many people in large metropolitan statistical areas across the country have access to trains. Here are some of the [Metrics](#) Customers reported 80 percent or better customer satisfaction with 31 out of 41 routes. Amtrak onboard personnel generally got high marks from riders; the lowest-performing category was on-board food service.