



Happy St. Patrick's Day

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Here we are finishing up the shortest month of the year, and to coincide with that, I will try to keep this report short as well. This time I would like to talk about two items, the first being our annual conferences.

We are just back from one of the best-attended conferences ever. I attribute that to two factors, one being that people are anxious to get back to face-to-face meetings, and while we had a good turnout the previous year, this year was very gratifying, I think people now have a better understanding of what COVID is and how to avoid or deal with it. The second was that we had a strong sponsoring organization with a museum collection and a seminar program that every member wanted to experience if they could. Our sponsors had to overcome some challenges, such as the tent, but they made it work.

Having been on the committees sponsoring two RPCA Conferences, I can assure you that everyone has curve balls that must be dealt

with. Next year is no exception; when shortly after we voted to go to SAM Railroad at the Lake Blackshear Resort located at Georgia Veterans State Park in Cordele, GA, the main lodge building was condemned and must be rebuilt or replaced. Our Conference team has already reacted, developing alternative lodging to replace the lost rooms, and the banquet, meeting, and hospitality rooms are not in the structure that was condemned. The folks at SAM have a great program laid out for us.

For the following year, we have been offered Pueblo, CO once again, but this time organized by Visit Pueblo and the Pueblo Convention Center. This is a departure from our normal pattern of sponsorship by an RPCA Member Organization. These sponsors are aware that we had a good conference there previously, and are doing it purely for the income and to attract tourism to Pueblo, CO. Many organizations use professional planners or ask for bids from various Convention and Visitors Bureaus with excellent results. The only downside to this is that they are more costly than our conference model because everyone working on the project is paid.

So, to ensure the continued success of our annual conferences, I ask every member to support our conferences by both attending and considering sponsoring a conference through their own company or a member organization. Hosting RPCA is a great way to expose our members to what you have to offer, be it a business, excursion line, or museum collection. It should also make a little money for your organization. I want to thank both folks at SAM and the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce and Convention Center for stepping up to host a conference. Who will be next? 2026 is available!

I will be very brief about the second item, which Burt Hermey will expound on elsewhere in this issue. There have been some recent cases where Amtrak has applied the change penalty for trip itinerary modification or

cancellation to changes that resulted from a mechanical failure of the owner's car. We are trying to understand how common this is and how it has been applied. If you have been assessed such a charge, please contact Burt.

Brad Black

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

SAVE THE DATE

RPCA 2024 CONFERENCE
JANUARY 11-14 2024
GEORGIA VETERANS STATE PARK
CORDELE GEORGIA
SAM SHORTLINE EXCURSION RAILROAD

Planned events include excursions on the SAM Shortline, seminars, hands-on workshops, vendors, silent auction, membership meetings, banquet, and hospitality room.





The cross-over participation in our January conference, pointed out by Keven Moore, is quite encouraging. This appeared in the NRHS newsletter

Two Organizations, Same Goals
By TONY WHITE, President NRHS
(pictured with Cate Kratville Wrinn)

In January, I attended my first Rail Passenger Car Alliance (RPCA) conference. There were many NRHS members attending this four-day event, including Wisconsin Chapter member Cate Kratville-Wrinn. The RPCA is an alliance to promote the preservation and operation of historic rail equipment. To accomplish this, they have educational, operation, maintenance, restoration, and safety seminars by working with Amtrak and the FRA to ensure that the cars meet the standards established by the industry. However, like the NRHS, they believe that younger people need to have access to the unique nature of railroading. The younger generation is the future of all things related to trains. The NRHS premier program to attract youth is its RailCamp program. Over 600 youths have attended the program since its inception. Chapters and individual NRHS members donate so that teens may learn hands-on about railroading from professional railroaders and companies. Many of these youth

remain members of the NRHS for years. Some come back to help with the RailCamp program. While I was speaking about the RailCamp program, baskets were passed around, and members at the banquet reached into their pockets and donated a record amount of money to RailCamp. The RPCA, through their members' donations, offers two scholarships yearly for one female and one male to attend one of the RailCamp programs. Check out the application for RailCamp on the NRHS website at nrhs.com

AMTRAK



Amtrak RPCA Conference Call Feb.27, 2023

From RPCA:
Brad Black
Burt Hermey
Mike Stickel
From Amtrak:
Theresa Smith
Jamal
Steve Robusto
Robert Ripperger

For FYE 2023, Amtrak reports 44 moves, 268 segments 137K route miles vs 2022, fewer route miles but similar segments and moves.

Amtrak reminded owners must use the current move request form on the website.

Other Business

Brad and Burt asked Amtrak about their interpretation of when penalty charges are applicable in the case of a PNR change due to en route bad order of a PV. See below for details.

In 2021, Amtrak issued a new "Conditions for Movement of Privately Owned Cars on Amtrak. This superseded the Tariff of 2007 and all the rate addenda that followed.

The 2007 document detailed penalty charges for what was widely interpreted as arbitrary Move Request changes made less than two weeks prior to first departure. Also, there was language waiving the charges when a car had to be substituted as a result of bad order of the originally scheduled car. Amtrak interpreted that to mean if a car was bad ordered and the PNR had to be amended as a result, penalties would not apply. Nor would parking if the bad ordered car was waiting to get into the shop.

The 2021 document, in addition to increasing the length of the penalty period to 30 days from 14 days, eliminated any language waiving penalties in the event of a bad order that requires a change to the PNR.

The penalty charge could range from a couple of hundred dollars to several thousand, depending on the number of miles involved in the segment(s) that require changing. Because of the nature of en-route bad orders, it's a near certainty that the penalty will be in the 25% bracket. In addition, extra parking days and any mechanical services performed by Amtrak will be charged to the owner/operator.

RPCA was recently made aware of one case of a 25% penalty charge being assessed for a PNR change on a bad ordered car; we are curious how many of our members have had the same experience, when it occurred, and what the resolution was. Please call or text me at (714) 264-9167, or email me at <cbhermey@pacbell.net> if you have been assessed this charge for your bad-ordered car.

Burt Hermey
Vice President

SAFETY

Carbon Monoxide



Carbon Monoxide. That silent, odorless, colorless, tasteless gas had claimed more lives. We came back from Spencer charged up and ready to make the final additions to the Bedford. Little did we know that Mother Nature had her own plans for cool temperatures and cold winds. It looks like we will be doing a lot of interior work until she changes her mind. That said, I will be double-checking the exhaust on the genset, as well as propping open an end door for an air supply. Carbon monoxide is not the only hazardous gas that can be found in a shop area. There are flammable gases, noxious gases, and others that can irritate the eyes and lungs. Nothing like stripping paint and inhaling those fumes for a couple of hours. My family had a pickup camper when I was a teenager. It had a catalytic heater in it should it get cold enough that we needed heat. It was my mom who would make sure to have a window cracked open somewhere for a supply of fresh air. Thanks, Mom, for looking out for all of us. She was also good at having us wash our hands as well. How about it? Open a window and wash those hands while remembering Gary's mom. Stay safe.

Gary

Enclosed Spaces

I have written a time or two about working in a space that is closed off with little or no fresh air supply. A sense of sorrow swept over me when I read the morning headlines out of New Mexico: "3 teenage boys found dead in garage". My first reaction was that of drug involvement. This wouldn't be the first story of teenage deaths related to drug dealing. Reading further into the article, it was noted that a propane heater was found in the same garage as the boys.

UMLER

UMLER
stands for
**Uniform Machine Language
 Equipment Register**


 Abbreviations.com

We received a mileage report for RPCNB. These are only for railroads that Greenbrier provides data services for. Very interesting considering 2022 was not an auspicious excursion year.
 Lots of cars are moving to new owners.

Total miles run in 2022: 12,776
 By RR:
 On BNSF: 1,872

On CN: 7,088
 On NS: 3,816
 By State/Province:
 In IL: 423
 In IN: 699
 In KY: 818
 In MN: 176
 In MT: 278
 In ND: 96
 In OH: 1,061
 In SD: 308
 In TN: 1,238
 In WA: 361
 In WI: 230
 In SK: 7,088

We are still waiting for the next major Umler update next quarter. That could happen as early as March or as late as June. See if the change we requested and was approved made it in correctly.

Anyone who does NOT want their cars to move behind rear DP units, send us an email or call to let us know. Once the change is in the system, we will go into each car and add "Handle on Rear only, including AAR RP-2001" that has not informed us they don't want it.

Take care, and stay safe.
 Pamm&Dan

Did you Know?



**The Wabash Blue Bird
 Pullman-Standard dome
 parlor car**

The beautiful post-war Wabash Chicago-St. Louis Blue Bird equipment was delivered to the Wabash by the Budd Company from November 1949 to January 1950. The consist was a baggage lunch counter lounge; three 54-seat dome coaches; a diner lounge; and a dome parlor observation car.

Parlor car business was so good on the new train that Wabash management decided to order an additional dome parlor car. That car was delivered by Pullman-Standard in July of 1952 and contained the famous “Blue Bird Room”, a large 11-seat day drawing-room under the dome that was designed for business meetings en route. But why was this car a smooth-side painted-steel car built by Pullman-Standard, instead of a matching mid-train stainless-steel dome parlor car built by Budd?

When a railroad desired to order new lightweight passenger cars, they would usually develop the basic specifications in-house, and then solicit bids from the three primary carbuilders of the day – American Car and Foundry, Budd, and Pullman-Standard. Information about this process that the railroads and carbuilders went through, and the bids submitted, is very hard to come by. But in the many passenger car books and magazine articles produced over the last 40 years or so, once in a while, there have been comments that give us some insight about that process.

It appears that with a few exceptions, railroad decisions about which carbuilder was awarded the contract to manufacture passenger cars were based on the lowest bid. Exceptions would be a railroad such as the Burlington, which was enamored with Budd Company passenger cars and their stainless steel construction, and thus almost always placed their orders with Budd, regardless of price. Once in a while - as was the case with the single Wabash dome parlor car order – a railroad desired to order a very small quantity of cars, in this case, just one car. The cost to design and the cost of materials for such an order would be very expensive compared to a multiple-car order. The Northern Pacific found this out some years later when they realized that they made a big mistake when ordering dome coaches and dome sleepers for the North Coast Limited from Budd, and did not order a protection dome coach and dome sleeper for that train. When they made the decision to order one of each from Budd in July of 1957 for late 1957 delivery (that's correct – roughly six months from order date to delivery!), the cost (also taking into account three years of inflation from 1954 to 1957) was almost 25% higher per car for the additional two dome cars compared to the price in 1954.

No doubt, the Wabash found out that ordering just one mid-train dome parlor from Budd was more than they were prepared to pay. But over at Pullman-Standard, the Missouri Pacific and the Texas & Pacific had an order placed in January of 1951 for five carbon-steel smooth-side flat-glass dome coaches for July of 1952 delivery. It was evidently proposed by P-S that the Wabash could tack their dome parlor car order to the end of the MP/T&P order and get the desired economies of scale. Even though it would be part of a small five-car order, it was still a much better price than just a single-car order. The Wabash well understood that this new car would not be a match to their beautiful Budd-built train, but the cost presumably outweighed the cosmetic advantages of a perfectly-matched trainset. They placed their order with P-S in February of 1951.

One might wonder why the Wabash did not tack on their one-car order to the large CB&Q order that was placed with Budd at roughly the same time. Those cars were ordered by the CB&Q in March of 1951 and delivered from June to December of 1952. There were two dome buffet lounge coach dormitory cars and two dome observation parlor cars that were very similar to the 1950 Wabash Blue Bird equipment, so one could assume that this would have been a viable option. Perhaps it was explored, and the cost was still too high compared to the P-S price.

It appears that Budd's delivery time for one Wabash dome parlor car as an add-on to the CB&Q order would likely have been January of 1953, so there was only about six months' difference in delivery time between the two builders. Enough to tip the scales in favor of Pullman Standard? Maybe. The answers hopefully still exist somewhere in some dusty files of a RR Historical Society. So, perhaps one day, we will find out for sure.

If anyone has comments or questions about this article, email Jon Clark at domeliner@hotmail.com.

Jon Clark

Just For Fun

HOW IT ALL BEGAN
Albany, N.Y.
Jan. 1, 1829

President Andrew Jackson
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

The Canal system of this country is being threatened by the spread of a new form of transportation known as "railroads." The federal government must preserve the canals for the following reasons:

1. If canal boats are supplanted by "railroads," serious unemployment will result. Captains, cooks, drivers, hostlers, repairmen, and lock tenders will be left without means of livelihood, not to mention the numerous farmers now employed in growing hay for the horses.
2. Boat builders would suffer, and towline, whip, and harness makers would be left destitute.
3. Canal boats are absolutely essential to the defense of the United States. In event of the expected trouble with England, the Erie Canal would be the only means by which we could ever move the supplies so vital to waging modern war.

For the above mentioned reasons, the government should create an InterstateCommerce Commission to protect the American people from the evils of "railroads" and to preserve the canals for posterity. As you may know, Mr. President, "railroad" carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles per hour by "engines," which, in addition to endangering life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside, setting fire to the crops, scaring the livestock, and frightening women and children. The Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speed.

Respectfully yours,
Martin Van Buren
Governor of New York

RAILROAD NEWS

This is a synopsis of Railroad-related news culled from various sources, including Trains Magazine, Progressive Railroading, Railway Age, and various websites.

Please submit your railroad news.

Museum and Excursion Trains



The U.S. Postal Service will hold a first-day-of-issue event for "Railroad Stations Forever," a five-stamp series, at Cincinnati Union Terminal on Thursday, March 9, at 11 a.m. EST. The stamps depict Cincinnati Union Terminal, along with stations in Point of Rocks, Md.; Richmond, Va.; San Bernardino, Calif.; and Tamaqua, Pa.;. A total of 30 million stamps have been printed.

The Railroaders Memorial Museum has acquired a former Pennsylvania Railroad baggage car for use in a planned exhibit train to accompany K4s No. 1361, currently undergoing restoration. The model B60b baggage car, built in the 1920s, was donated by Railway Excursion Management Co. The car had been in maintenance-of-way service at Amtrak's Ivy City terminal in

Washington, D.C., for decades.

Historic Pullman Foundation is gearing up for its second Pullman Railroad Days, set for May 20-21 at Pullman National Historical Park. It will be the first such celebration since Pullman gained National Historical Park status at the beginning of the year. There will be displays of Pullman-built cars of different eras at the 111th Street/Pullman station on the Metra Electric line. Among the cars scheduled to appear this year are New York Central No. 3, built in 1923; observation car Royal Street, built in 1950, and Blue Ridge Club, also built in 1950. The weekend will also feature the foundation's 50th-anniversary exhibit, marking the group's work preserving, interpreting, and promoting Pullman's history; a virtual-reality experience on advanced railroad technology, hosted by Norfolk Southern; guided tours of the Historical Park grounds; activities; food; and entertainment.

Tickets are now on sale from the Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad for its 2023 Rail Heritage Photography Weekend, a two-day event in May limited to 70 attendees. The event set for May 6-7 will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Cass Scenic Railroad and will feature the railroad's locomotives pulling vintage freight trains.

The Conrail Historical Society will open its \$150,000 museum and archive center, housed in a retired 86-foot hi-cube auto-parts boxcar, on April 1, the anniversary date of the railroad's founding in 1976. A brief ceremony at noon that day will mark the culmination of several years of the society's collaboration with Shippensburg University, the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail, Cumberland Area Economic Development Corp., and the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau.

The last surviving EMD F7A of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle and the last SD9 purchased by Great Northern Railway are both moving to the Inland Northwest Rail Museum in eastern Washington. Five of the Alco cab units exist in some form but the former SP&S 804 is the only EMD cab. Built in January 1953, the engine was used on the Minnesota Zephyr excursion in the late 1990s. That folded in 2007 and the engine sat in Stillwater, Minn., until it was purchased for the Iowa Pacific Holdings-owned San Luis & Rio Grande and moved to Colorado in 2015. It was at risk of being sold to for scrap during the recent bankruptcy liquidation of SL&RG, but was rescued thanks to contributions by members of the SP&S Historical Society.

The Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad has one more year to operate its 1919 Baldwin 4-6-2, Santa Fe No. 3415, before the locomotive is sidelined for two years to undergo its federally mandated 15-year inspection. The railroad, which believed the rebuild was due this year, discovered it had another year in the process of filing required papers with the Federal Railroad Administration. As a result, the 4-6-2 is now slated to operate 28 times this season, beginning Memorial Day weekend.

Amtrak/Freight/Federal Agencies



Amtrak crews have begun qualification runs between New Orleans and Mobile, Ala., as the railroad prepares to restore regular passenger service along the Gulf Coast. The qualification runs are using Amtrak equipment and are the first time that the passenger railroad's equipment has regularly appeared on the line since Hurricane Katrina ended service there in 2005. Amtrak officials say the qualification runs will last for several months. A start date for the new Gulf Coast service has yet to be announced. Restoring service east of New Orleans has long been a goal for Amtrak but one the freight railroads there, Norfolk Southern and CSX, long fought against. However, late last year, the three railroads were able to broker a deal that will allow passenger trains to return this year.

Arizona Democrat and former U.S. Navy pilot and NASA astronaut Mark Kelly has assumed chairmanship of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure. EPW Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Senior Republican Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia on Feb. 9 announced the appointment for the 118th Congress.