



Bill Beckwar photo

ILLINOIS RAILWAY MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS, SOME IN AUTHENTIC NORTH SHORE LINE UNIFORMS, DISPLAY THE NEWLY ACQUIRED INTERURBAN SPEED TROPHY WITH NORTH SHORE INTERURBAN #160 (BRILL 1915). SEE PAGE 19.

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## HeritageRail Journal

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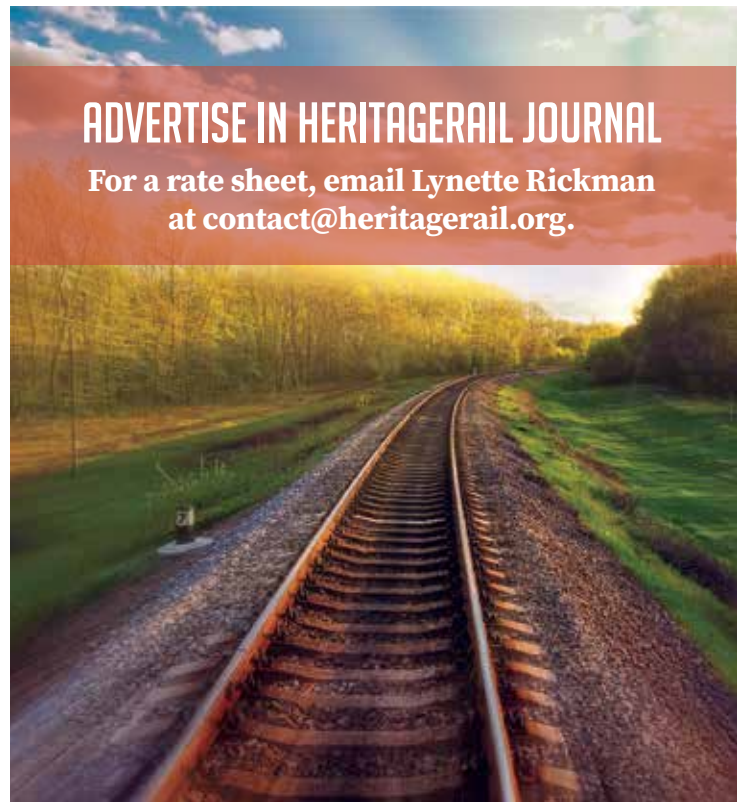
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# FROM THE HEAD END

By Bob LaPrelle, HRA president

## Common Ground...

In July of 1969, an 11-year-old boy climbed aboard Santa Fe's Texas Chief in Fort Worth, Texas bound for Chicago. It was just another northbound run to Dearborn Station, but for him it was the beginning of a lifetime journey. That young impressionable boy was me, and I've been running on that experience ever since.

All of us in the heritage rail field are bound together by the passion that grew out of whatever railroad experience grabbed our hearts and minds. Each of us has turned that passion into a vocation or avocation. And whether it's reviving a steam locomotive, operating a vintage trolley, or hosting a school field trip to a museum, we're all deeply committed to our work.

But, obviously there are differences within such a large field. That's where HeritageRail Alliance comes in. Let's look at the breadth of what our association takes in – it's really quite amazing.

HRA consists of: for-profit and non-profit organizations, public and private ownership & governance, paid and unpaid workers, multiple generations, operating and static collections, seasonal and year-round operations, and finally, tourist railroads, electric railways, museums, and historic sites & structures. And some of us fall into several camps. That's a huge assemblage of organizations, missions, cultures, and casts of characters. HRA has a tall order to consolidate all of its members and "advance railway preservation". The premise is simple however – strength in numbers.

During the merger discussions between ARM and TRAIN several years ago, the leaders of both organizations were diligent to ensure that representation of all members was preserved. Our roadmap was a strategic plan and decades of institutional experience. The merger task was daunting, but we all agreed it was the right thing to do for railway preservation in the 21st Century.

When we consummated the merger at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in 2010, it was a new beginning – and the creation of a somewhat cumbersome name for the new organization. In the ensuing years, a blending of cultures took place along with amassing an amazing array of knowledge and industry reach. And, oh yes a new name, HeritageRail Alliance.

Fast forward to 2020 and the onset of Covid. What was undoubtedly the biggest challenge to our field is now behind us, but we are forever changed. Our approach to railway heritage and our audience is against a background of just how fragile our enterprises can be.

I strongly believe HRA is more important and relevant than ever as we navigate changing priorities and new external challenges. While some of these issues were already trending before Covid, we were suddenly forced to reckon with them during the pandemic – right smack in the face for some of us. And that's where common ground and our passion comes together as members of HRA.

I'll be expanding on this in the next issue of the Journal. In the meantime, let me know your thoughts on what HRA can do for your organization and how you can play a role in that effort as a member.

Finally, our thanks to Paul Hammond and the Colorado Railroad Museum for sponsoring HRA's participation in AAM's 2023 Advocacy Day in February. Their financial gift enabled us to again have a noticeable presence on Capitol Hill and support AAM's continued effectiveness in championing the cause for museums. In the museum world, sponsorships and outside financial support are essential to carrying out our missions. At HRA, we will be exploring additional ways that such support can advance our cause as well.

Bye for now, be safe!

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# INSIDE THE HERITAGERAIL CONFERENCE

By Steve Heister, Northern Ohio Railway Museum

*Editor's note: The last issue of HR Journal only covered the conference's field trips to member museums. Thanks to Steve Heister for this recap of the plenary sessions, seminars and networking opportunities from the Northern Light newsletter.*

The last time I left Ohio was February 2020 for Winterfest at the Connecticut Trolley Museum, the annual gathering of trolley museum volunteers. Shortly after that weekend of networking and socializing with fellow trolley preservationists, Covid came on the scene. Lots of things changed for a while, including no in-person HeritageRail Alliance (HRA) conferences. Fast forward to earlier this year, the HRA decided the circumstances were right to resume in person gatherings again. The last one had been held in September 2019. I made the decision to go.

Wednesday night, September 7th, the conference began with an evening reception followed by the Annual Meeting. The meeting covered the usual matters one would expect. This initial gathering also allowed me to begin some networking I needed to do. I had a lot of people to talk to in a relatively short time. The next few days would be very busy between sessions for me.

The next morning the first plenary session was Industry Issues and Challenges. This has become a fixture at the conferences. It works this way, someone poses a question, then someone else, or multiple people, in the room offer answers. Typically, when someone has an issue to deal with, someone else has already dealt with it. It is a great way to share information. If a solution isn't known, then a group discussion can take place with many knowledgeable minds contributing. We had extra time for this session, since our next session was cancelled when the presenter came down ill that morning.

Then it was onto a bus for a field trip. But even here time was not wasted. Do you remember an article in our Northern Ohio Railway Museum newsletter article a year ago titled, "A Walk in the Woods"? It was about visiting the site of a bridge the Museum will have to build someday. That walk answered a couple of questions, but created many more. At the

conference I met with an engineering firm to see what I could learn. At his suggestion, Randy Gustafson from Stone Engineering and I sat together on the bus. We reviewed materials on the bridge site I had brought. He shared a lot of valuable information with me. It was an eye-opening experience. I now have a much better understanding of the financial needs, what we need to do to prepare for this project and how the process will work while the bridge is constructed.

Friday morning began with a Plenary Session. It was titled, Succession or Secession, about the purpose and perpetuation of a museum board of directors. Bob LaPrelle, President & CEO, Museum of the American Railroad; Scott Becker, CEO & Executive Director, Pennsylvania Trolley Museum; and Wesley Heinz, Executive Director, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad gave the presentation.

Needless to say, many of the topics covered related to many of the matters I was inquiring about with the New England trolley museums and others. The session concerned itself with issues related to bylaws, governance and administration. It was a great session to be in and I learned a lot of valuable information. I will close with a thought that Wesley Heinz has found success with; "Boards should care more about the community than the trains. It will take a while, but that care in the community will come back and reward you". I like that!

The next Friday session was about the AASLH Standards and Excellence Program. Scott Wands, Director, Grants and Programs for Connecticut Humanities presented. AASLH stands for the American Association for State and Local History. They operate a program called STEPS. This is a self-evaluation program designed for a museum to look at themselves. It facilitates an organization to learn what its strengths are and more importantly what its deficiencies are. STEPS is a way to evaluate yourself by recognized museum standards. There is also mentoring from other Museum professionals to help you in that process.

This isn't the first time I have heard of this program. In 2014 I learned of it from the Oberlin (Ohio) Heritage Center. They were offering an overview of the STEPS

program for area museums. I went representing N.O.R.M. Back then I saw the STEPS program as something the Museum could use someday. But I felt that we were not ready for it at that time. I could see that practically every point of measurement in the program would show us needing major improvement. We have made many improvements, but still have many to go. Is now the time to consider having N.O.R.M. participate in the STEPS program? Perhaps, perhaps not, but definitely something to discuss.

The day ended back at the convention hotel with a Show and Tell event. This is another fixture at conferences. It is a chance for attendees to share what is happening with their home organization. I gave a presentation about our activities and accomplishments.

The final day of the conference opens with breakout sessions at the hotel. Difficult choices had to be made as five different seminars were being presented. They repeated in two time slots, but that meant you could only take in two. I wish I could have attended all of them. I attended Marketing Your Museum by Rene Mack, President of Percepture Travel. This gentleman and his firm are from New York City. The biggest and best marketing, advertising and promotion firms are centered here. I got the impression during the session that this gentleman and his company had the connections and skills necessary to sell water to the Mississippi during a flood! He had a great amount of success that he showed evidence of. While we may not have the connections to get TV network executives to take our calls, the base ideas that he sold them on can be applied to any level of marketing and promotion. That is what his seminar was ultimately about. I was very happy to have chosen this session to attend. I returned home with several good ideas we can apply at the Museum.

The final session at the hotel was called Customer Service for Everyone. It was presented by Brian Messinger with the Essex Steam Train and Riverboat/Valley Railroad. Sue Legree requested I attend this session and I am very happy she did. Brian opened the session with a sad, yet heartwarming story about a family, cancer, the absolutely wrong way to handle a delicate situation and how he fixed it. After telling the story, he went through typical tourist railway problems and how to handle them in a positive way. He also covered delicate issues that sometime arise with social media and people with disabilities, some disabilities

not readily apparent. He closed with a couple closing thoughts. He said our job is to put smiles on people's faces. Also make sure to say Thank You for riding.

Then it was back onto the buses, this time our destinations were trolley museums. At the Shore Line Trolley Museum, an added feature was a couple seminars going on in the restoration shop. I took in Jeff Hakner's session on electric motors. This was a fantastic hands-on session with various electric components passed around and an electric motor on a stand for easy identification of parts. Jeff had volt meters and megohmmeters on hand. He demonstrated motor measurements as he spoke. By the end of the session Jeff's hands were quite dirty. Jeff also wrote a 22-page handout for the session and had copies available. I returned with one and shared it so its treasure trove of knowledge could be shared around N.O.R.M.



*Jeff Hakner checks out a motor during a seminar at Shore Line Trolley Museum. Steve Heister photo.*

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The conference ended with the Annual Banquet and Awards. Information was shared about the next conference. In the awards program there was one item of interest to us. Bill Wall of the Shore Line Trolley Museum was honored for his service to trolley preservation. Bill has been a deal maker for years. Always keeping his finger on the pulse of the industry and knowing who needs something and who has something surplus. He has worked out many equipment trades over the years, some of them quite complicated involving several parties. They have benefitted the industry as a whole. Working with Bill on deals got to be jokingly known as shopping at Walmart! Bill also was the coordinator of the massive Trolleyville disbursement in 2009. The Museum worked closely with Bill to help that go smoothly. The Museum has benefitted from Bill's wheeling and dealing. Going up on the rostrum to accept his award, Bill had on a windbreaker tightly zipped up. When he got there, he removed it and revealed a Walmart workers vest. Always the jokester, it was a move in keeping with his character. Congratulations Bill.

You would think the story ends here. It is only the end of chapter one. Now I needed to share the knowledge I had amassed. Over the past few months I have been e-mailing out reports to the Museum Board of

Directors, Trustees and department heads. First, I shared notes from the annual meeting and banquet presentations. Then came the Buck Run bridge report.

I shared my notes from seminars as well as reconstituted PowerPoint presentations I had seen. With digital photography one can afford to shoot every image that is projected. The time killer here is running every image through Photoshop to correct image flaws from photographing a slide show on the fly. While time consuming, it is worth it since I can now share the experience I had being in that seminar more fully.

My final report is the most complex one. It covers my talks with Museum staff, administrators and board members of other trolley museums. It presents the experiences of other museums and postulates ideas and practices we can think about that have been done elsewhere. While my trip was only 16 days including visits to additional museums before and after the conference, it has taken me about 4 months to share everything I amassed in that brief time period. I think it was well worth it. The next HRA conference is September 20th to 23rd in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Now where did I put that French-English dictionary? Adieu.

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## TERMINOLOGY FOR RESTORATION AND REPAIR

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

**R**eporting on restorations of railroad rolling stock, I find the term "restoration" to be overly broad when it comes to describing the work to you the readers. We need better terms for the different levels of equipment fixing. "Restoration" should mean bringing a derelict, non-operating piece back to life. It requires extensive mechanical, structural and cosmetic work. A "cosmetic restoration" includes just the structural and cosmetic work. I'd like to propose the term "rehab" to fix up a previously operational piece. Rehab implies overhaul of components, sealing of leaky windows, seat reupholstery and probably some body work on a tired piece of operational equipment. A paint job with minor body work doesn't justify the term rehab. Perhaps that's a "facelift".

Continuing down the hierarchy of repairs, I don't report on routine maintenance, with one exception. That is the FRA-mandated 1472-day steam locomotive inspection. Inspection? It's really a mechanical teardown, usually requiring significant replacement and/or repair of mechanical components. And it's usually more expensive than any of the above. So I guess we'll consider the 1472 to be its own category.

### **Correction from last issue**

The Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum has purchased the former Boston & Maine Buckland freight yard which it used to lease, and no longer owns the 0-4-0T mentioned in the text.



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# RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR RAILWAY MUSEUMS PART 8: FUNDING

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

**T**he RP section on Funding starts with this eternal truth: *“Membership fees, admissions fees, demonstration ride proceeds, and retail proceeds have historically provided funding for non-capital (operating) expenditures at railway museums...In the long term, however, these funds in most cases will not be adequate to cover the additional costs of increased staffing, capital improvements and educational programming.”*

There’s never enough funding. That’s the endless challenge facing most small non-profits. As mentioned above, funding operations and capital projects requires different approaches.

## **Operations:**

Most museums assume they will cover operating expenses from some combination of admission fees, demonstration ride tickets, membership dues and store revenues. An analysis of admission and ticket prices reveals the different revenue potential of three models of railway preservation: static display museums, museums with demonstration railways and straight up tourist railroads. Here are the average adult admission prices and fares for the three types from a recent website search.

\$7.54 Static display museums  
\$19.08 Museums with demonstration railway  
\$34.28 Straight tourist railroad

On their face these numbers would imply that everyone should just run tourist trains, but it’s more complicated than that. Static display museums may not be able to charge as much because there’s no train ride. However, their costs are lower. There’s no railroad with operational rolling stock to restore and maintain. Consider the difference between keeping a steam locomotive operational versus a one-time cosmetic restoration. Despite those increased costs, I believe that having a train ride results in more net revenue than static display alone.

What about the gap between ticket prices for museums with train rides versus straight tourist railroads? Tourist railroads usually have a higher cost structure.

They often have more miles of railroad to maintain. They’re more likely to rely on paid employees instead of volunteers. Because they’re usually for-profit companies, they pay taxes. Most can’t qualify for government or foundation grants so their operating revenues must also fund capital expenses. Tourist railroads fail at a much higher rate than museums, which implies that their economic model involves greater financial risk.

Within operating revenue, there are regular scheduled train rides and there are special events. With some exceptions, ridership on the former has been stable or gradually declining for years. Special events have become an ever increasing share of total revenue. They started small with Easter Bunny trains, pumpkin patches and Santa trains. The development of big licensed events, most notably Thomas the Tank Engine and Polar Express, was a major leap forward. While these have provided much-needed revenue, some museums may have become over-dependent on a single annual event.

Adding rail bike operations appears to be the next big revenue opportunity. They can exploit unused track hours and they’re commanding about twice the ticket price of a conventional train ride.

## **Capital expenses:**

When a locomotive needs its 1472-day inspection, or a chicken coop needs to be turned to an operating streetcar, or a storage building needs to be built, that’s a capital expense. Unless you have a robust revenue stream, operating revenue won’t cover it. Fund raising is required.

A few museums have gone into debt to make it happen, but most museums are pay-as-you-go. The usual funding sources (in no particular order) are member donations, foundation grants, government grants, and whatever small campaigns (buy a brick, for example) can be dreamed up.

Although a handful of private foundations give grants for railway preservation, most of the private money



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comes from sympathetic local foundations with whom the museum has a relationship. Pennsylvania Trolley Museum's Executive Director Scott Becker, one of the industry's best fund raisers, says that relationships are paramount and you have to work hard to develop them. Often private companies will make in-kind donations of materials or services instead of cash and take a tax deduction.

Ever since Congress drastically curtailed Transportation Enhancement (now called Transportation Alternative) grants in 2012, government grants have been few and far between in the United States. Canadian grants have been somewhat more available. Often state and provincial grants are the best option, but their availability varies

widely and requires proactive grant hunting.

#### **Educational programming:**

If our industry has a financial frontier to explore, it may be educational programming. There's a huge world of education grants out there, which this writer has not begun to learn. I'm guessing that's true of most railway museums. If any reader knows more about education grants, feel free to submit an article.

Although it's not on the revenue side of the ledger, let's be grateful for volunteer labor, one of the industry's great strengths because it reduces the revenue need.

*To download a copy of Recommended Practices, go to [heritagerail.org](http://heritagerail.org) and log into the For Members section.*

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## ERIC SCHLENTNER'S PAINT GUIDE NOW IN HRA LIBRARY

Ever wondered how to match vintage railroad exterior colors using modern paints? You can go to the paint store and hope they get it right—or you can consult Eric Schlentner's amazing guide. He's done the research for you and his comprehensive guide now resides in the HeritageRail Alliance online Library. To view it, go to [heritagerail.org/](http://heritagerail.org/) and sign into the For Members section.

HRA is building a comprehensive technical library to assist preservationists and his Paint Guide is exactly what we're looking for. It covers vintage locomotive and passenger car colors for all the historic Class One American railroads, including Pullman, plus a certain number of freight car and structure colors. The Canadian railroads are not currently included. For each color, all the comparable modern commercial colors are listed.

Eric until recently had his own website, but had to give it up. He says, "The paint research project started out innocently enough about 12 years ago looking for the historical color codes used on P&WV equipment for a friend's modeling project and it mushroomed from there. It's an offshoot of the artwork for stencils, decals, printing and vinyl appliques I supply to rail preservationists, car owners and model manufacturers. They ask questions, I do some digging. I still have a large amount of data that needs to be deciphered and added as time permits or by request. I don't think this little project will ever be done."

Eric stresses that this is a living document, because paint manufacturers change their formulations. He'll periodically update the guide.

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## ONE PERSON MAKES A DIFFERENCE

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

recently visited a restoration project and a museum that are largely the products of a single person's initiative.

**Trolley Car No. 93 Restoration Project, Jamestown, NY**  
Bob Johnston is a lifelong resident of Jamestown,

population 29,000. He always had an interest in history but didn't consider himself a railfan. Then a friend showed him the body of Jamestown Street Railway #93 (St. Louis Car 1926) in the woods where it had been a cabin since 1938. The car is a rare modern single

trucker that isn't a Birney. Johnston decided it should be restored. The owner donated it in 1996, but restoration didn't start until 2013.



*Bob Johnston with #93.*



*So far #93 is just a car body, not mounted on trucks.*



*The car now has a complete set of leather upholstered cushioned seats.*

Number 93 was a typical chicken coop project, not in great shape and mostly a shell. Today it's a beautiful

cosmetic restoration. A talented local man, Jim Michener, did much of the work, but it was Johnston who did the research, raised the money, scrounged parts, procured indoor storage space, got materials donated and publicized the project.

Michener recently passed away, but the car body and the interior are done. Johnston acquired an unpowered truck with appropriate 26-inch wheels from Seashore Trolley Museum, but it will have to be lengthened before being installed. Johnston is getting help with that from Scott Symans of Dunkirk, NY. Symans owns Viscose Company 0-4-0T #6, which is rented out to museums for short term operations.

Currently #93 is all dressed up with nowhere to go. It's stored in an industrial building that's not open to the public. Johnston hasn't been able to find a permanent home without raising substantial money to erect a new building. The truck work will progress, but an exhibition site is stalled for now. Johnston would like to keep it in Jamestown, but wonders if that will be possible. It's a rare car and would be a welcome addition to any trolley museum, even as a static display.

### **J&L Narrow Gauge Railroad, Youngstown, OH**

This museum wouldn't exist if it wasn't for Rick Rowlands. It's his baby. Unlike the Jamestown streetcar, the Youngstown project has been well publicized through RyPN.org. I knew muscular 2-foot gauge Jones & Laughlin Steel 0-4-0T #58 (Porter 1937) had been restored and was hauling passengers, but the scope of the museum was larger than I expected.



*Rick Rowlands with Jones & Laughlin Steel 0-4-0T #58.*



It's located on several acres in an industrial area on the northeast edge of town. Rowland wants to keep it rough, so visitors feel like they're exploring a real industrial site, not a pretty museum.

Dominating the site is a large, plain steel building. Inside is an enormous stationary two-cylinder compound steam engine. It served a steel mill and had to be disassembled to move it onsite.



*From left to right are New York Central GE 70-ton center cab #513, a U S Steel 75-ton Kling hot metal car, J&L 0-4-0T #58, Pennsylvania Railroad 3-foot 6 1/2 inch gauge Baldwin battery locomotive #3 from Cleveland's Whiskey Island dock, the new building that houses the stationary steam engine, two-foot gauge cars from Carpenter Street in Reading, PA.*



*The stationary steam engine.*

Behind the building is an L-shaped railroad that only recently started running for the public. Track has been laid that includes a 6 percent grade to make the engine work. Rowlands has quite a few people helping him, but still does a tremendous amount of the work by himself. He quit his railroad job to devote full time to the museum. One current project is converting a CSX boxcar into an engine house. Rowlands has a thing

for Erie block signals and power switches. The former triggers the latter on this railroad, reducing the need to stop and throw switches by hand.



*Looking down the 6 percent grade. The switch for a proposed passing siding is in place next to a Conrail caboose.*



*This CSX boxcar is being converted into an engine house. Note the rails protruding from the end.*

More track is coming, and hopefully more operating steam. The museum owns two of #58's sisters, #57 and 60, and they are future projects. Besides selling train rides, the museum offers what it calls the Steam Locomotive Experience. It's much more than cracking the throttle for an hour. Participants start with a cold locomotive, clean and lubricate it, build the fire, then run it, and put it to bed. It takes about 6 hours.



# ACQUISITIONS



*The rolling stock donated by Union Pacific to Railroading Heritage of Midwest America has arrived at the Silvis Shops. The Candelaria Fund has granted RRHMA \$75,000 toward their restoration. Jeff Terry Photo.*

Atlanta rapid transit car #509 (Societe Franco-Belge 1981) to Southeastern Railway Museum.

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum has acquired Norfolk & Western lightweight coach #1480 (Budd 1949). It was built as a sleeper for the Pocahontas and Cavalier trains. Purchased by the Pennsylvania in 1960, it was converted to a coach and received the current number. It joins sister #1488 at TVRM.

Elgin County Railway Museum in St. Thomas, Ontario has acquired Wabash wood caboose #2622 from a private owner. It is reportedly in excellent condition.

Bessemer & Lake Erie 3-pocket hopper cars #90878 and 90366 (built 1934) to Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum.

Pullman 12 section-1 drawing room heavyweight sleeper John Greenleaf Whittier (Pullman 1929) to Illinois Railway Museum from the Iowa Pacific auction. Although IRM has other sleeper configurations in its collection, this is their first 12-1. Pullman built 3492 of them and they comprised 40 percent of the fleet. If a lesser limited was going to have a single sleeper, it was likely to be a 12-1, and most trains with multiple sleepers carried at least one of them.

Western Pacific coach #302 (Pullman 1910) and WP boxcar #56059 (Pacific Car & Foundry 1957) to the Western Pacific Railroad Museum

Burlington Northern has donated SD9-3 #1550 (EMD 1954) to Lake Superior Railroad Museum. The engine was rebuilt in 1998 with a new cab, new electronics and air conditioning.

Canadian Pacific dome observation Riding Mountain Park to Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society.

Here's one we missed. The Museum of Science & Technology has deaccessioned Intercolonial Railway diner #4006 (Wagner Car 1899). It went to the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario in Smiths Falls in 2019.

Reading & Northern has acquired three Budd RDC cars from Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. They were originally B&O #9922, B&O #6511 and Boston & Maine #6134.

Pennsylvania 1920s model B60b heavyweight baggage car to Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum.

A wood Western Pacific reefer to Nevada Northern.

# HERITAGERAIL NEWS

## Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum, Sugarcreek, OH



Reading camelback 0-4-0 #1187 (Baldwin 1903) is getting a cosmetic restoration. Photos courtesy Age of Steam Museum.



Age of Steam Museum has erected a 464 X 65-foot open-sided car storage shed. Its four tracks can shelter up to 40 freight cars.

## Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum, Altoona, PA

The museum has deaccessioned three pieces from its rolling stock collection. They are:

- New York Central 250 Ton Crane & Boom Car (Industrial Brownhoist 1948). Two sister cranes are preserved in other museums.
- Pennsylvania Railroad Business Car #7511 "Duquesne," (Altoona Passenger Car Shops 1929). It has been offered for free, but no takers.
- Pennsylvania Railroad 10-6 Sleeper Car #8351 "Birch River" (Pullman Company 1949).



Pennsylvania Railroad Class X29 boxcar #51121 (Altoona Shops 1929) has been restored at Age of Steam Museum.

## Chelatchie Prairie Railroad, Yacolt, WA

The State of Washington has approved \$500,000 for ballast work on 7 miles of the railroad.

## Cincinnati Railroad Club, Cincinnati, OH

In 2015, during a major renovation of Cincinnati Union Station, the club had to vacate its longtime rented space in Tower A, with its panoramic view of the railroads in the Mill Creek valley. They returned to the station in 2022, with offices and archives in rooms below Tower A. They're hoping to return to Tower A in 2024, but that's uncertain at this time.

## Colebrookdale Railroad, Boyertown, PA

The railroad has received a \$2.25 million state grant to enhance its Boyertown station area with a market building, performance stage, event support facilities, landscaping and ADA improvements. Construction is expected to start in 2024.

## Conrail Historical Society, Shippensburg, PA

The society has constructed a museum and archive center in a retired 86-foot hi-cube auto-parts boxcar. It's scheduled to open April 1. The project is a collaboration with Shippensburg University, the Cumberland Valley Rail Trail, Cumberland Area Economic Development Corp., and the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau. The car sits on a section of panel track adjacent to the rail trail on the former Cumberland Valley Railroad. It is located near the Cumberland Valley Railroad Museum, which occupies a 50-foot former Penn Central boxcar.





*Rudy Garbely photo.*

### **Exporail, Montreal, QB**

When Exporail acquired the enormous Canadian Pacific archive, it included 28,000 photographic negatives. Of those, 21,637 were found to be cellulose nitrate, the material of film negatives until the 1930s. Nitrate is unstable and can spontaneously combust. Furthermore, the gases released as the negatives degrade can attack surrounding documents. The only way to conserve them is to scan and then freeze them. That process is now underway, funded by \$86,900 in grants from Library and Archives Canada.

### **Great Smoky Mountains Railroad**

The State of North Carolina has awarded a \$1,011,978 grant for bridge improvements and track upgrades.

### **Minnesota Transportation Museum, St. Paul, MN**

The museum has received a pair of large grants. An anonymous donor has given \$100,000 to repair the siding at Marine, MN, runaround point for excursions on the museum's Osceola & St. Croix Valley tourist railroad. The Hardenbergh Foundation has granted \$110,000 for repairs to Jackson Street Roundhouse. One of the museum's top priorities is replacing the roundhouse roof.

### **Museum of the American Railroad, Frisco, TX**

It has been Infrastructure Year at the museum. The final stages of underground utility, drainage and electrical work have been completed. The last two of eight exhibit tracks have been laid. The long concrete platforms between the tracks have been poured. The large "Santa Fe" sign from the Garland, TX intermodal yard, donated 30 years ago, has been mounted on the exterior wall of the recently completed shop building.

### **Nevada Northern Railroad, Ely, NV**

The railroad has raised almost \$500,000 to repair 4-6-0 #40 and 2-8-0 #93. The Nevada Northern's original mainline ran through Ely and was later replaced by a

bypass. A short section of the original line remained, but in poor shape. The railroad has received a grant and rebuilt it, allowing trains to connect the East Ely Depot with the Cherry Creek Depot and the White Pine Public Museum.



*The stub of the original Nevada Northern mainline through Ely is being rebuilt to host excursion service. Photo courtesy Nevada Northern.*

### **Nevada State Railroad Museum/ California State Railroad Museum**

These two museums have entered into a two-year agreement (2022-2024) to loan each other a pair of Virginia & Truckee artifacts. NSRM sent 4-4-0 #18 (Central Pacific Sacramento Shops 1873) and coach #17, built for Central Pacific at Sacramento. In return, CSRM sent 2-4-0 #21 J. W. Bowker (Baldwin 1875) and 4-4-0 #12 Genoa (Baldwin 1873), both original V&T engines. The swap sent these pieces home for the first time in about 80 years

### **New York Transit Museum, New York, NY**

New York City Transit R-10 subway car #3189 (ACF 1948) has been restored by the New York Transit Museum. It has been painted in the 1964 turquoise and white World's Fair livery.

### **Niles Canyon Railway, Sunol, CA**

Running a museum isn't all fun. Consider this quote from Alan Siegworth in the latest Club Car newsletter. "We also finished the extensive amount of work required to prepare the locomotives for winter such as blowing water out of the appliances and everyone's favorite job – cleaning the smokeboxes. Smokebox cleaning has to be done to prevent acid erosion of the smokebox and front tube sheet but it is one of the worst jobs on the railroad – even wearing a Tyvek suit, mask and goggles does not prevent you from ending up covered head to toe in black soot that really does not wash off the skin until several showers later."



### **Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad, Garibaldi, OR**

The railroad has completed the restoration of Craig Mountain Lumber Heisler #4.

### **Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, Washington, PA**

If you read this issue's Recommended Practices essay on Funding, you'll notice the mention of Pennsylvania Trolley Museum's fundraising success, which has happened only because of long-term relationship building by Executive Director Scott Becker. Here are the grants listed in their most recent newsletter.

- \$15,000 from the EQT Foundation and \$10,000 from the Jack Buncher Foundation for new classroom equipment and materials.
- \$20,000 operating grant from the Treadway Foundation.
- \$125,000 from the Richard King Mellon Foundation to fund a Director of Marketing & Development Position plus digital marketing production.
- \$3000 from the St. Louis Chapter NRHS for restoration of Pittsburgh PCC #1138 (St. Louis Car 1937).
- Portable restrooms donated by Ohio Valley Septic.
- Although a dollar amount has not been announced, John and Janet Swanson have committed to fund the museum's education program staff, plus installation of expanded solar power on the roof of the Trolley Display Building and four electric vehicle charging stations.



*When you own a horsecar, how do you interpret it without owning a horse? You get an artificial horse, but from where? Lowry's Western Shop, a local business, displayed this fiberglass horse outside the store for 45 years when a vehicle hit it and broke its leg. The store donated it to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, and Prime Collision Center donated the necessary repairs, including repainting. A museum member donated the bridle and reins. Kristen Fredricksen photo, courtesy PTM.*

### **Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, PA**

At the end of steam, the Pennsylvania Railroad

preserved a selection of steam locomotives at its Northumberland, PA roundhouse. They were transferred to Penn Central ownership. In 1972 they were donated to the State of Pennsylvania and became the core of the new Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. Several were cosmetically restored and are displayed inside the main exhibit hall, but there wasn't room to house them all. Five have remained outdoors and suffered from exposure. The long range plan is to house all of them, plus restored E6 4-4-2 #460 (Juniata Shops 1914) in a new 6-stall roundhouse, now in the final design stage. Construction may happen in the next two years, but that's not a certainty.

In the meantime, the museum is taking steps to stabilize the locomotives. The first is Class B6 0-6-0 #1670 (Juniata Shops 1916) which has been sandblasted and primed. H10 2-8-0 #7688 (Lima 1915) is in the midst of the same treatment. Once completed, L1 2-8-2 #520 (Baldwin 1916), K4 4-6-2 #3750 (Juniata Shops 1920) and M1 4-8-2 #6755 (Altoona Shops 1930) will follow.

### **Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, Chattanooga, TN**

The Chattanooga Choo Choo hotel in the former Terminal Station had been in decline for some time and the fleet of 28 passenger cars converted to hotel rooms were in need of either repairs or scrapping. Now a new developer is putting \$10 million into renovating the hotel and dealing with the rail cars. The number of rooms in the hotel building will increase from 75 to 105, and there will be 25 rooms in the refurbished rail cars. This is a big decrease from 2015, when there were 400 rooms in total. According to the Chattanooga Times Free Press, eight cars will be relocated adjacent to the hotel. This work is being supervised by Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. Nine other cars will be retained, but not as hotel rooms.

Four former Southern cars are being donated to TVRM. Ex-New York Central diner #456 (Budd 1948) and one other NYC car are going to Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. NYC coach #2665 (ACF 1942) was too structurally gone and has been demolished.

In other TVRM news, its for-profit railroad subsidiary Tyner Terminal has added another operating site, the mile of track owned by tiremaker Nokian Tyres to switch its factory and warehouse. TVRM has rehabbed a switcher from its collection to operate at the plant.

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### **Western New York Railway Historical Association, Buffalo, NY**

Thanks to a \$206,809 grant from the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, the Association was able to put a new roof on its large Heritage Discovery Center building.

### **Wheels O' Time Museum, Peoria, IL**

The museum has restored a pair of wood Pullman observation cars previously part of a Peoria restaurant. The first is the former private car Elfleda (Pullman 1901). In 1908 the car was sold to the Colorado & Wyoming Railroad. In 1927, it was rebuilt and sold to the Burlington. In 1934 it went to the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad for the use of the company president. From 1947 to 1957, the car was not used and remained on a siding in the TP&W East Peoria freight yards. In 1957, it was about to be scrapped, having deteriorated badly. Pete Vonachen, purchased it and moved it to his Peoria restaurant site. It was stripped of interior furnishings and used as a dining car. The grand opening was in November, 1958.



*Restored observation cars on display outside Peoria, IL. Photo courtesy Wheels O Time Museum.*

In 1959 the restaurant acquired Chicago and Eastern Illinois business car #800 (Pullman 1891 or 1892). As built it was numbered 502, a classic arch-windowed wood car with a kitchen, bathrooms, bedrooms and sitting areas. It was overhauled in 1946 at the C&EI Oaklawn shop in Danville, Illinois. At that time the outside wood was replaced by steel plating, the windows were squared off, ice-activated air conditioning was installed and it was renumbered to 800. Once part of Vonachen's Restaurant, its interior was kept intact. Both cars remained on their wheels. The restaurant closed in

2008 and sat vacant until 2010, when it was demolished. The owner offered the two cars to the Wheels O' Time Museum for free, provided they pay for moving the cars to the museum site. That happened in February, 2010. Since then the museum has restored the cars and opened them to the public in 2022.

### **Winnipeg Railway Museum, Winnipeg, MB**

We previously reported that the museum was being evicted from its longtime open air home under the Bush train sheds of Union Station Tracks 1 and 2. The local transit system wanted the two tracks for bus rapid transit. There were also some building code rulings that the retaining walls holding up the elevated right of way had become unsafe. This situation has suddenly turned around and the museum has signed a 25-year lease with VIA, which owns the station. It appears, however, that the museum can't reopen until it raises about \$2 million to replace the plywood partition between Tracks 2 & 3 with metal/concrete/glass, the electrical plant and lighting must be upgraded, and the sprinkler system must be replaced to qualify for an occupancy permit.

### **Timber Heritage Museum buys Samoa Shops**

It may have been the most difficult site acquisition ever. In 2007 the museum rented the former Hammond Lumber Company Samoa shops and Roundhouse from the Humboldt Bay Harbor Authority. It was a month-to-month lease with a steep rent payment, but they were permitted to restore the buildings in lieu of cash rent. They stabilized the buildings, repaired all the windows, reroofed and repainted them using largely volunteer labor and donated materials. In 2015 an agreement was reached to work toward purchasing the site. There was pollution requiring a remediation plan and over \$1 million to clean up, all the museum's responsibility but funded largely by government grants. After seven years the cleanup is complete and ownership has been transferred to the museum. This opens the door to further improvements, including rebuilding tracks into the site.

### **Three revivals**

Three pieces of equipment that hadn't turned a wheel in many years are operational again. Kennecott Copper VO-1000 diesel switcher #801 (Baldwin 1942) last ran at the Nevada Northern 39 years ago. Speaking of rare diesels, Whitewater Valley Railroad now has the only two operating Lima diesels. ARMC Steel #709 (Lima-Hamilton 1950) is running again for the first time since the late 1980s.

The final revival is Pacific Electric business car interurban #1299 by Southern California Railway Museum. Built in 1914 as a trailer on the Southern Pacific's Portland, Eugene & Eastern, it was transferred to the PE in 1915 and rebuilt into its present form in 1929. It last ran about 1958. Preserved on static display at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds in Pomona, CA, it was acquired by SCRM in 1998. After a thorough cleaning, reconnecting the motor leads and testing, 1299 ran again under its own power in February 2023.



*Kennebec Copper VO-1000 #801 is fired up for the first time in 39 years. Photo courtesy Nevada Northern.*

### **Meridian Railroad Museum reborn**

The Meridian (Mississippi) Railroad Museum shut down five years ago and has now been reborn. The Meridian Union Station was built in 1906, and the Railway Express Agency built a separate building next door. The City took possession of both properties and successfully applied for one of the first federal ISTEA Transportation Enhancement grants in 1991. The restored depot was dedicated in 1997. It hosts Amtrak and a Greyhound Bus terminal.

The Meridian Railroad Museum was formed in 1989 and moved into the REA building. A spinoff of the Queen & Crescent Chapter NRHS, it never incorporated and there was no formal lease with the City, which owned the building. It was open to the public twice a month, and had one large annual event. A model railroad club built a large layout inside.

Several pieces of rolling stock associated with the museum but with different owners are parked by the REA building. They are:

- Central of Georgia Nancy Hanks II coach 660
- Louisville & Nashville Pullman sleeper 4157 Miss Alba. It was later converted to a coach, then a diner.

- A Meridian & Bigbee caboose
- There's also a Southern bay window caboose, stored off-site.

The museum was mostly spearheaded by one man. When he passed away in 2018 the museum lost direction and the City evicted it, including the model railroad.

Fast forward to 2020. Lucy Dormont's husband is in the military. They had lived in Meridian for a while before being transferred elsewhere, but now they were back. Their two young sons both love trains and were frequent visitors to the museum, but now it was gone. Lucy decided to investigate and discovered the City's eviction was illegal. The REA building had been donated by the locally prominent Stack family and the deed specified that the REA building be used for a railroad museum.

Lucy incorporated the Meridian Rails Historical Society. The City didn't put up a fight. In fact they donated the REA building to MRHS in 2021. Next door is a sprawling 60,000 sq. ft. building that until a few years ago was a cotton compress and warehouse. What's a cotton compress? That's the process of making paper with cotton fibers. The press was steam powered by two large boilers, and that equipment was still in the building. Out of nowhere the owner donated the building and the steam powered press. Suddenly the new 100-member museum was large property owner. With the property comes 1000 feet of track.

Lucy went from being the volunteer president to being a paid executive director with the goal of developing museum. In a place like Meridian, population 41,000, that means rallying the town behind the project, getting corporate donations and applying for grants. One priority is to secure ownership of the rolling stock. That includes Meridian & Bigbee 2-8-0 #116 (Baldwin 1917), on display in Highland Park.



*Meridian & Bigbee 2-8-0 #116 (Baldwin 1917) and a caboose are located in Highland Park.*



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The museum is in the classic bootstraps stage. It has a property with potential and a good history story to tell.

### **Is Headwaters Junction dead?**

The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society was invested in a major redevelopment project called Headwaters Junction. Here's how it was described on their website.

"Headwaters Junction is poised to become a major riverfront attraction in downtown Fort Wayne. Equal parts tourist railroad, railyard park and roundhouse, Headwaters Junction will be a new destination for recreation, entertainment, and education, providing the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society with an interpretive center for their collection and a railroad that connects the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo with downtown. With annual programming and events, the riverfront will come alive with the magic of Fort Wayne's famous trains."

In 2015, the project was made part of the riverfront plan and in 2016, Headwaters Junction Inc. was officially formed as a 501(c)3 non-profit by a group of community leaders and FWRHS members. A series of marketing and feasibility studies aided by over \$100,000 in grants from Steel Dynamics, Greater Fort Wayne Community Foundation and the Schust Foundation established that the project would bring in 140,000 visitors and contribute \$60 million to the local economy. It would be a home for Nickel Plate 2-8-4 #765.

For reasons that are unclear, the project has been dramatically scaled back. Headwaters Junction is now only a renovated depot with a single railcar parked out front.

The Society has gone in a completely different direction. In 2022 it started running excursions on 105-mile shortline Indiana Northwestern, which extends into southern Michigan. The base of operations is Angola, IN. According to a story in the Greater Fort Wayne Business Weekly, Society President Kelly Lynch wants to create the facilities intended for Headwaters Junction in Angola under the name Pufferbelly Junction.

### **Mount Ranier Scenic Railroad reopens**

The railroad has had some ups and downs in the last few years. American Heritage Railroads bought it from the nonprofit Western Forest Industries Museum in 2016. AHR introduced successful events to the railroad, and made significant investments in bridges and track.

Unfortunately the major 2017 fire that shut down the Durango & Silverton created financial problems and AHR temporarily shut down the Mt. Rainier Railroad.

WFIM was essentially dormant under AHR's for-profit ownership. The IRS questioned the transfer of assets and ruled that AHR owed taxes on the receipt of the property. The timing couldn't have been worse, because Covid hit at the same time. AHR closed the railroad and laid off almost the entire staff.

David Baublits, the new Mayor-Elect of Eatonville began negotiating with AHR to assume control of WFIM and for reconveyance of the railroad in 2022; the reconveyance was finalized towards the end of August. WFIM now owns all assets except a diesel locomotive, some Tacoma Rail cars, and 13 acres at Park Junction – all are being rented under a 4-year lease. Currently WFIM is trying to purchase the 32 miles from Eatonville to Morton from Tacoma Rail, which is owned by the City of Tacoma.

WFIM plans to open in Spring 2023 with a 6-mile round trip rail bike operation from Park Junction to Mineral. A \$530,000 grant has been received from Pierce County for the development of the railbike operation. They will be the closest rail bikes to Seattle and Tacoma, and the proximity to Mount Ranier is a plus. The plan is for rail bike profits from the railbike operations to pay for improvements to the railroad and rolling stock.

Polson Lumber 2-8-2 #70 (Baldwin 1922) is coming up on its 1472 in 2025 but is in good operating order. The other proposed locomotive is Hammond Lumber 2-8-2T #17 (Alco 1929) which needs repairs.

WFIM's long term goal is to move the center of railroad operations to Eatonville, including the construction of a new depot and repair facilities. Significant funding and planning are needed to rehabilitate the tracks and bridges between Elbe and Eatonville.

### **SMS starts up new Woodstown Central tourist railroad**

SMS Rail Lines, until now an industrial switching provider known for its restored Baldwin diesels, has opened its first tourist railroad. It's happening in concert with their new contract as freight operator of the Salem County-owned 16-mile Swedesboro-Salem line in southwestern New Jersey. Passenger service is starting on an intermittent basis with a Baldwin switcher and restored Reading caboose. SMS has acquired five former

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Jersey Central commuter coaches from Vermont's Green Mountain Railroad and will start using them this spring. Ex-Army, ex-Virginia Blue Ridge 0-6-0 #9 is being restored and at some point will pull excursions. The county has invested considerable money in the railroad, including installing quite a bit of welded rail.

### **Two interurban artifacts surface**

Recently a couple of surprising survivors of the interurban era have found their way to museums. The son of the last president of the Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee has donated to the Illinois Railway Museum the Interurban Speed Trophy (see cover photo). The trophy was created in 1924 by Electric Traction Magazine to honor the nation's fastest interurban. The winners were:

- 1925, 1926 Galveston-Houston Electric Railway
- 1929, 1930 South Shore Line
- 1927, 1928, 1931, 1932, 1933 North Shore Line

In 1933 the prize was given permanently to the North Shore Line. When the North Shore was abandoned in 1963, its president took the prize home. His son inherited it and donated it to IRM, which has eight North Shore interurbans, the most anywhere.

The 1903 Chicago Aurora & Elgin interurban waiting shelter from Wayne, IL has been acquired by Fox River Trolley Museum. Last used in 1958, it was owned by a family near the old station site and was completely intact.



*The CA&E Wayne shelter at Fox River Trolley Museum. Joe Hazinski photo.*

### **Boomer Shay finds a new home**

The Oregon Historical Society has selected Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation in Portland to be the new owner of the Mount Emily Shay #1 (Lima 1923). This will

hopefully be the last stop on a transcontinental odyssey by the locomotive.

It was built for Hoftus Steel & Equipment in Seattle, sold to Independence Lumber Company, then to Mount Emily Lumber Company at La Grande, OR. Retired in 1955, it was donated to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). The original intent was to donate Mount Emily Willamette Shay #4, since that locomotive had been built in Portland. However, while the donation paperwork was in process, the Willamette was scrapped. Shay #1 was donated as a substitute.

The Shay was stored at the Union Pacific roundhouse in La Grande, Oregon, until 1957, when that roundhouse was torn down. The locomotive was then towed to the Northern Pacific Terminal Yards in Portland. OMSI's original intent was to move the Shay up to their facility, which was then located near the Portland Zoo. However, it was determined that the Shay was too big to fit through a tunnel and that alternate routes were not practical. OMSI then turned to the Oregon Historical Society and asked them if they would accept a transfer of the Shay. OHS has owned the Shay ever since.

Mount Emily Shay #1 was stored in Portland rail yards, was periodically painted but never had a proper home. In 1979, it was "discovered" by the folks at Cass Scenic Railway, and a long-term lease was entered into between OHS and Cass.

Shay #1 was restored to operation at Cass in 1972. Unfortunately, only a few months into her operation, a fire destroyed the old Cass Engine House and badly damaged the engine. Cass rebuilt it. A second long-term lease was eventually entered into and the Shay would remain at Cass until 1992.

In 1992, Oregon Historical Society decided to bring the locomotive home. They selected the City of Prineville Railway to host it. The Shay was finally moved to Prineville in 1994 and put into operation.

A few years ago, the City of Prineville notified OHS that they no longer wished to operate it. OHS began to analyze what to do with Shay #1. In 2022, they issued a request for proposals to find a new owner and new home. Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation was selected. The plan is to have the Shay retubed and recertified under a new 1,472-day inspection for operation in later 2023.

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# A HOLIDAY TRAIN STORY

By Dwayne Fuehring, Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum

*Reprinted with permission from the Caboose Cable newsletter*

It's that time of year to reflect on what has become our biggest annual event, the Holiday Train. This will be the 7th time I've had to write a post event report for the Holiday Train. I went back and looked through some of the previous articles and the theme is pretty consistent. The event was successful, volunteers stepped up in a big way, we made many customers happy and full of Christmas cheer, etc. This year was not any different, in fact it was record-breaking. Let's look back and examine how this all transpired.

This year my family like many others had their holiday plans disrupted by the Christmas blizzard of 2022. My brother Roger was finally able to join us on the Tuesday after Christmas. Towards the end of the evening, with a house full of cheerful children and loud adults, we (Roger and I) retreated to the kitchen. It's in those private moments where we tend to share what's going on around us in the rail industry (freight, passenger, heritage, and tourist). He has a broad perspective as he is a professional railroader and serves as the president of the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance, a national organization of passenger car owners and operators. "I can remember when October rolled around, we drained the coaches, put antifreeze in the sink traps and we were done until Spring", he remarked. "The movie Polar Express has completely changed everything", he continued. Roger was absolutely right, the New River Gorge trips out of Huntington West Virginia usually marked the end of excursion season.

We continued to analyze this in conversation. About the time 765 started running excursions in the early 1980s, we had a clientele that remembered steam engines and passenger train travel. It brought a sense of nostalgia that people wanted to relive. We are generations removed from that now and a simple train ride is difficult to market and be successful. Big main line steam can still be successful to some degree, but I think that's mainly because of the extreme rarity that it happens. For everyone else it's all about the gimmick, the theme, or the experience. It's no different than our regular customer base during the museum season. Most of our customers are not coming to see our trains and artifacts, they're coming to enjoy an experience with their family.

Polar Express trains and Thomas the Tank Engine have caused the entire museum and tourist railroad industry to evolve. This is not something many have embraced willingly, including us. It has become necessity for survival. The good news is you don't have to pay the movie or TV royalties to mimic the formula. The Steam Railroading Institute runs their North Pole Express for five weekends during the holidays. It's a bit of a generic knock-off of the Polar Express formula, but I think it's the gold standard for Christmas trains and works with amazing success. Cuyahoga Valley, Denison Railroad Museum, Cincinnati Railroad Company, and Fort Wayne all have a holiday passenger experience of some kind, and that's only listing the places that are within a few hours' drive from us. This was not something that was done 20 years ago by anyone, keeping in mind that the Polar Express was released in 2004.

Flashback to 2013 now. For years leading up to then, we debated extensively about making the investment to rebuild our coach yard. Having the financial resources and rail construction contractors doing extensive work in Bellevue made for a moment in time where a hard decision had to be made. Do we invest and rebuild, or lose the ability to use the coach yard as a rail facility due to the deplorable track conditions? When we presented the proposal, I can remember telling the board that it was necessary but that we would never recoup our investment financially. Well, I'm happy to say I may have been wrong. We're not there yet, but I think our investment will pay off in the next 10 years.

In 2015 we decided to give the Christmas themed train a chance. We approached it in the following way. Carl Norse in Delaware, Ohio had tremendous success with his trains using some of our equipment on a very short section of track. Fort Wayne was successful as well only using two cabooses. We studied these operations the most, and looked at a few others, but then we had to take that formula and transcribe it to the infrastructure we had available.

The first year was very crude, some believed it would work, some did not, but from the very first event, none of us were prepared for the degree of success it would have. "The thing about trains...it doesn't matter where they're going. What matters is deciding to get



on.” – Polar Express Conductor. Each year we've tried to improve something. Sometimes it's noticeable to the public, sometimes it's upgrades that makes the event easier for the volunteers. The biggest change in 2022 was operating three weekends. I'm not going to say it was easy, it was actually very challenging, but the payoff was huge. As I've noted before, we typically spend over two months preparing for this event each year, why not try to capitalize a little more on all that preparation. This year we spent significant time doing some brake and bearing maintenance on the Norfolk & Western bay window caboose. The vestibule on the N&W safety instruction car received considerable repairs and was used to replace a set of stationary steps. Updated signage was used at the boarding area that helped with the loading process as well. Finally, we added two-way radios for train crew members, the gift shop, and the ticket caboose.

So how did it go you ask? Record breaking! The 3rd weekend was the biggest success, that Saturday we sold 1,140 tickets. Total ticket sales for the event came in at a staggering 5,312. Gift shop sales for train theme Christmas gifts were off the charts as well. Our 40 volunteers had their hands full keeping up with the insane demand we experienced. This is a good problem to have, but we cannot continue without addressing

capacity issues. We had extremely long wait times for passengers in the chilly weather. While complaints were few, we're a little nervous that if we don't address this problem many folks won't return if we can't make the experience more fluid. We are already looking for a third caboose option and we will be discussing upgrades for 2023.



*Whitewater Valley Railroad's restored Dearborn Tower from Lawrenceberg, IN sits alongside the former New York Central line on the south edge of Connersville, IN. Photo courtesy Whitewater Valley.*

## Help Wanted

### *Executive Director, Kentucky Railway Museum*

The Executive Director oversees the day-to-day operations of the organization including an operating railroad. The position calls for financial management skills as well as fund raising via donations, grants, etc.

The person will maintain and build relationships with a wide variety of individuals and organizations, both regionally and nationally, which includes visitors, donors, government from local to Federal level, corporate customers, volunteers and staff. As the face of the organization, the person serves as liaison with public media, overseeing all communications including website and marketing materials, developing program strategies and policies, while promoting the organization's mission, goals and objectives.

Skills and qualifications for this position include (expected, but not limited to) very good verbal and written communication skills, project management practices, personnel management including volunteer relations, problem solving skills to determine mutually beneficial solutions, proficiency with word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software. Occasional local and regional travel for meetings may be required. The preferred candidate will have had volunteer or paid experience with a tourist railway or other relevant operating railroad experience.

Salary to be commensurate with experience. Benefits for this position include Vacation, 401K contribution, health insurance. For additional information and for submission of your Resume (including four references), contact: [kyrail@bardstown.com](mailto:kyrail@bardstown.com) Or: Kentucky Railway Museum, Attn: Board, PO Box 240, New Haven, KY 40051

## Well established Southern Indiana Excursion Railway seeks GENERAL MANAGER

The Indiana Railway Museum is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation, established in 1961, it owns and operates over a former Southern Railway Branch Line ( 32 Miles ) out of French Lick, IN.

The organization operates the “French Lick Scenic Railway” a seasonal Tourist / Excursion Railway with a very successful “Polar Express”.

The organization also operates the “Dubois County Railroad”, a Class III Short Line Railroad operating between Huntingburg and Jasper.

The Indiana Railway Museum is now seeking a new General Manager.

This position will supervise the following staff :

8 Full Time - 20 Part Time – 100 + Seasonal.

The position will require experience in dealing with FRA and State Regulations , as well as Experience in Track and Equipment Maintenance.

The individual must have Computer Skills and some grant writing experience and be able to communicate well with others. Individual would be eligible for Railroad Retirement.

Salary Range will be based upon qualifications and experience.

For a complete “Job Description” contact :

[Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org](mailto:Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org)

Resumes and references may be sent to :

[Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org](mailto:Businessmgr@frenchlickscenicrailway.org)

Or mailed to:

Business Manager, PO Box 150, French Lick, IN 47432

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LOOKING FOR A GREAT NEW WAY TO BOOST REVENUE  
AND REACH NEW MARKETS? A RAILBIKE PROGRAM  
USING OUR REVOLUTIONARY NEW RAILBIKES IS  
JUST THE TICKET.

## WHY RAIL GLIDERS?

### HASSLE-FREE

Designed to be operated and maintained with a minimum of staff and skill, they will ensure the profitability of your business.

### HIGH BUILD QUALITY

Industrial-quality construction means a long life of reliable and exceedingly low-maintenance operations. No mid-trip breakdowns in the busy season.

### MADE IN THE USA

Manufactured in Pennsylvania. Customer service based in Pennsylvania available **24/7**.



Get in touch with us today to discuss how we can implement the right Glider program for you!

[www.railgliders.com](http://www.railgliders.com)

### LIGHT WEIGHT

A total weight of only 240 pounds.

### STEEL RIM TIRES

Steel rim tires on steel rails = no friction. Bikes glide effortlessly and 6.5" pedal cranks make pedaling easy.

### REVERSIBLE SEATS

The Rail Glider **NEVER** needs to be lifted to change direction. Merely reverse the seats and flip the switches to pedal in the other direction.



Already operating a  
**railbike program** and tired  
of the breakdowns and  
overhead costs?

Our patent-pending bikes were  
designed **ESPECIALLY** for heritage  
and tourist rail operations by  
tourist railroaders.







## QUALITY WORKMANSHIP SINCE 1832



### Strasburg Rail Road Mechanical Services

Photography by: Christopher Pollock

• ASME "S" Stamp • NBIC "R" Stamp

Complete calculations for FRA Form 4

Custom design, builds, rebuilds & repair of:  
steam locomotives, wooden-bodied freight &  
passenger cars, boilers, brake equipment, safety  
valves, injectors, as well as reproduction hardware  
and furnishings

Complete steam locomotive wheel shop on-site

Supplier of certified boiler parts (superheater units,  
flanged sheets, flexible staybolts, caps, sleeves, etc.)

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