



# RAIL REPORT

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rocky Mountain Railroad  
Historical Foundation

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January 2023 Issue 745



Reading & Northern 2102 by Steve Barry



**Steve Barry Favorite Images from 2022 will be featured via Zoom on January 10, 2023 club meeting.**

## **FAVORITE PHOTOS OF 2022**

Steve Barry will present some of his favorite photos of 2022. Main line steam, vanishing Class I railroads, and modern and historic transit will all be a part of the diverse year.

**Upcoming Programs - February 14 - Mark Huber; March 14 - Blair Kooistra.**

Please join us for an enjoyable, educational evening at Christ Church at 2950 South University Boulevard (University Boulevard at Bates Avenue) where there is plenty of off-street free parking at the rear of the complex. Please bring a guest. All programs are intended to provide an educational experience on railroading. The general public is welcome to attend. There is no charge for this meeting.

# **Rocky Mountain Railroad Club - Rail Report Denver, Colorado**

Denver Address; PO Box 2391, Denver, CO

## **President's Column**

**Club President Andy Dell**

Happy New Year 2023. I hope everyone had a fun and healthy holiday. We start off this New Year reflecting back on the last year and look forward to a productive new year. I myself had a mixed 2022 year with some bad but mostly good. As our family and friends get older, some of them pass on. Some gone too young and others that have lived a long prosperous life. I remind myself that each time I am with family or friends to treat it as though it may be the last and not hold grudges.

In light of Covid, many activities have been canceled or postponed in the last 3 years. In 2023, much of that will have diminished to the point of things being closer to normal perhaps even more so than 2022 if all continues in a positive direction. The things I am not looking forward to are inflation, increased insurance costs and fuel prices. They will likely have a large effect on tourist railroads this year and I am hoping that doesn't cause a big drop in attendance. For me, I am eagerly watching what is going on at the East Broad Top and hope to go for my first visit in 2023 or 2024.

This is the first month for our official transition from the traditional Rail Report to the email style Rail Report. Printouts of the email format will be mailed to those that have renewed their dues and paid for the mailed report in 2023.

That is all I have to say for now. I look forward to seeing many of you at in person meetings this year and perhaps some activities this summer if we are able to schedule some affordable outings.

## **David Wagner former BOD Member Passed Away**

**In Remembrance - David Wagner**

Dave Wagner passed away in early December 2022. He was a 13 year member, and held card #228. We appreciate that he had volunteered as a member of the Board of Directors in 2010-2011.

## Robert 'Bob' Krieger UP Steam Team Engineer / Fireman Passed Away



Robert "Bob" Paul Krieger (UP black jacket), passed away at age 75 on November 23, 2022 just before Thanksgiving. Bob Krieger was born July 2, 1948 in Lockport, IL. He worked for the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific RR from 1972 to 1976 in train service.

He was interviewed and hired on the Rock Island Railroad in Blue Island, Illinois, in early 1972 with a brakeman's date established that April. He worked freight trains, passenger trains and commuters. In 1975 Bob took promotion to conductor. By the end of 1975, seeing the struggles the Rock Island was having to survive, Bob looked west.

He was hired on the Union Pacific Railroad in Cheyenne, Wyoming, as a switchman/brakeman. His qualification date was May 5, 1976. Bob worked in the yard until that fall when he was added to the road extra brakeman's board going west to Rawlins. After a few weeks he was cut back to working in the yard when an opportunity arose, and he qualified in the yard tower as a yardmaster. This position lasted until mid-January 1977 when he was cutback and furloughed.

About a week later he was called for engine service on the 4th district working Cheyenne to North Platte, Nebraska. This entailed various jobs in the Cheyenne facility. From there he moved up to switch engine engineer in Cheyenne Yard. Eventually he was added to the road jobs. In 1979 he helped restore the steam locomotive number 3985 back to service working with Steve Lee.

In 1988 was selected to be an engineer/fireman on the prestigious UP Stream Heritage Program where he remained until his retirement in 2003. Since retirement he has worked for the UP Historical Society as their Business Manager. He is survived by his sister Deborah.

Bob Krieger was the Union Pacific Historical Society business manager based at Cheyenne, WY, at the time of his passing November 2022.

## **Trainsets will undergo braking, acceleration and other operational testing at TTC**

Springfield, Va., October 10, 2022

ENSCO Rail, the global engineering services company, announced today that it has reached an agreement with Stadler US Inc, the rail vehicle manufacturer, to conduct operational testing at the Transportation Technology Center (TTC) in Pueblo, Colorado. Testing will be performed on Stadler Diesel-Multiple Unit (DMU) trainsets in support of its delivery to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). ENSCO, Inc. assumes management of the U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Railroad Administration’s TTC research and test facility October 1.

“ENSCO is excited to support Stadler’s DMU operational tests for these state-of-the-art DMU trainsets,” stated Jeff Stevens, ENSCO, Inc. president. “We thank Stadler for choosing ENSCO to conduct this testing at the TTC in recognition of our technical capabilities as the Center begins a new era under ENSCO’s management,” he continued.

Stadler-built DMUs will undergo multiple operating tests on the TTC’s test track to evaluate braking, acceleration, ride quality performance, and safety compliance measures. The TTC’s vast network of test tracks and rollingstock test equipment provide Stadler – and other rail vehicle manufacturers around the world – with complete and comprehensive testing and evaluation of new trainsets. Use of the TTC to conduct these tests eliminates interference with railway revenue service operations. The Stadler passenger rolling stock testing program marks the first of many rail, transit, and surface transportation companies that will utilize the unique and comprehensive testing capabilities of the TTC under ENSCO’s management. ENSCO provides its commitment to the railway industry for the confidentiality of data and information generated by all site users. (Info courtesy of ENSCO)

## **Rail Workers Forced to Take Tentative Contract Agreement**

President Joe Biden signed legislation December 2, 2022 to prevent a national rail strike and implement a tentative contract agreement between the nation's major freight railroads and their workers. The U.S. Senate yesterday passed the legislation in an 80-15 vote. The Senate rejected an amendment to the bill that would have extended the "cooling-off period" that would have given four unions and railroads more time beyond a Dec. 8 deadline to continue negotiations. The Senate also rejected an amendment that called for adding seven days of paid sick leave for rail workers.

## **Colorado Pacific Owner Wins Bid for San Luis & Rio Grande RR November 2022**



Above photo - Engineer Chance Fowler and his friend on CXR 1964. KCVN and Colorado Pacific owner Stefan Soloviev moved to expand his Colorado railroad holdings. Mr. Soloviev officially placed a higher bid for the San Luis & Rio Grande RR with the US Bankruptcy Court in early November 2022.

**Colorado Pacific Railroad won the auction for the San Luis Rio Grande Railroad with a final winning bid of \$10.7 million.**

OmniTRAX, the only other qualified bidder made an offer of \$5.7 million. In a bidding competition that trustee Bill Brandt described as "spirited," the Colorado Pacific's bid was, in the end, an 85% increase over what OmniTRAX had originally put on the table.

San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad Trustee William Brandt pushed for a closing to the sale of the railroad to OmniTRAX and laid out the terms of the sale agreement in a filing submitted to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Colorado on October 12, 2022.

The railroad trustee had asked the court to give parties until Nov. 2 (2022) to file objections to the \$5.75 million sale of the historic railroad to OmniTrax, which is headquartered in Denver. (courtesy Alamosa News & Editor)



Scoular held a ribbon cutting with OmniTRAX 419 & 420, freshly painted locomotives at Grafton, Nebraska, west of Wallace, NE, November 17, 2022. The Grafton Shuttle Loading Facility now can handle 110-car unit trains. The facility expanded storage capacity to 6 million bushels with new twin, 140-foot-high concrete tanks. Nebraska-Kansas-Colorado Railway (former Burlington Northern Hi-Line) serve the operation. ©2022 Chip

## Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railway (NKCR)

Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railway (NKCR) owns and operates approximately 509 miles of track in three states and carries a diverse mix of traffic including wheat, corn, coal and fertilizer. NKCR, one of several railroads in Nebraska, has benefited from its ability to attract high throughput grain elevators to its lines due to its superior service record and excellent relationship with BNSF. More specifically, NKCR recently made considerable track improvements in conjunction with upgrade investments by the owners of grain elevators at Venango, Nebraska, Loomis, Nebraska and Holyoke, Colorado, each of which now loads 110-car shuttle trains. In addition to grain, NKCR ships liquid fertilizer shuttle unloaders at Maywood, Nebraska, Imperial, Nebraska and Holyoke, Colorado.

OmniTRAX painted two SD40-3's at Grant, NE, in October 2022. Former 5107 and 5157 were renumbered to OMLX 419 and 420. Sharp dark blue scheme with yellow safety stripping. Grafton, NE, \$15 million dollar elevator expansion was completed in 2022. First unit train loaded in October 2022. A ribbon cutting was held November 17, 2022 when the 2nd unit train was loading. (Courtesy NKCR General Manager, Mr. Hull)



OmniTRAX Nebraska-Kansas-Colorado Railway OMLX 419, ex-CEFX 3107< NREX 5126/RMGX 5126 < nee CN 5126

©2022 Colorado Zephyr - Freshly painted OMLX 419 & 420 Scoular lettering. Wallace Subd at Grant, NE, Oct 20, 2022



OmniTRAX 419 & 420 at Grainton Shuttle Loading Facility ribbon cutting held 11 AM on Thursday, November 17, 2022. Operation is served by Nebraska-Kansas-Colorado Railway. ©2022 Chip photo.

## **Colorado Railroad Museum - Cover Over Railcars**



The Colorado RR Museum will soon be erecting a cover that will give some weather protection for displayed rail cars. The base concrete blocks are seen here next to CB&Q business car #96 on 12 Nov 2022. ©2022 Dave Schaaf

## Historic UPRR Equipment Moved to Silvis, IL



UP Heritage Equipment moved to the Railroading Heritage of Midwest America included UP 5511, 2-10-2 Baldwin built in September 1923. UP5511 was at Cozad, Nebraska, November 14, 2022. ©2022 Chip

## Silvis Open House Event Nov 20, 2022. Story by Tom Sharratt



Steve Sandberg (orange vest) and Bon French in front of UP 3985 at Silvis Shop, IL, open house November 20, 2022. Photo ©2022 Tom Sharratt

It was an honor to be in Silvis for the arrival and donation of some UP gems on 19 November. It came off without a hitch (that I could see).

The shops had had been cleaned to perfection - like a HUGE GI party! I could have eaten off the floor - REALLY! It was a very impressive and formal reception with food and a bar . . . the facility is not yet open to the public, but it will be at some point. The Canadian Pacific has donated a turntable from Chicago, and it will be installed where the original Rock Island turntable was located. Also planned is a roundhouse for locomotive display. All this will take a LOT of \$\$ and time, but Steve Sandberg has a pretty good track record so I am hopeful it will meet expectations.

This facility was last used by National Railway Equipment (NRE) that rebuilds diesel locomotives. NRE still has some operations in a small part of the shops, most of their work has been consolidated at a facility elsewhere in Illinois.

Steve plans to do custom work for other railroads (currently there is one of Iowa Interstate's Chinese steam locos in the shop with repairs being made with some IAIS steam personnel). I think it is likely that it will also do work on passenger cars - like customizing a private car. All the facilities and equipment needed to do this type of work are "in house" at Silvis and Steve has done a lot of this type of work in a much smaller shop in Minneapolis where the MILW 261 and his fleet of cars are maintained. Steve says he does not plan to relocate any of the equipment in Minneapolis to Silvis. He does hope to run some Christmas trains (and maybe other seasonal events) in the Quad Cities area, similar to his Santa train at St. Paul Union Station. The train on static display with the locomotive hot, and Santa events in the cars (similar to Polar Express). He has done this way for many years and it has been very popular.

Tom Sharratt, Westby, Wisconsin



UP 3985 4-6-6-4 Challenger facing UP 6936 Centennial at Silvis Shop where Railroading Heritage of Midwest America plans restoration work. Nov20, 2022 open house ©2022 Tom Sharratt.

## Royal Gorge Route News



The Royal Gorge Route currently operates a total of 12 miles with trips departing from Cañon City. Given the region's stunning geography the railroad now draws more than 100,000 visitors annually and hosts a wide range of excursions.

The CRRX 3104, GP40, is up for sale. The unit is painted the Royal Gorge Route orange and silver. The 602 is painted a tastefully Christmas paint scheme entering service starting around Thanksgiving on the Santa Express train.

Trips are well patronized again in 2022.

CRRX 8001 a former Southern Pacific economy baggage car has been converted to head end power by Canon City Shop forces (all work done inhouse). Car now has two Kohler 800-KW diesel powered generators to supply electricity to the entire train.

The Sierra Hotel has been acquired by The Royal Gorge Route. Car was purchased in March 2021 from Tom McOwen, Cincinnati, Ohio. Car is awaiting remodeling and event planning.

She is a Budd dome, sleeper lounge with an open platform. Budd-built in 1948 as Vista-Dome-dormitory-coffee shop Silver Lounge for the "California Zephyr." Later Amtrak 9811. Totally rebuilt to dome-business car by a previous owner. Completed in 1989.



Escalante Western caboose was part of the SD40-3 (three units 601, 602 & 603) purchased by The Royal Gorge Route. Caboose was repainted at Cañon City Shop September 2022. Caboose will become part of the Happy Endings Cafe near the Cañon City Depot. © 2022 Chip



Colorado Pacific RR acquired two locomotives in September 2022 from National Railway Equipment, Mount Vernon, IL. CXR 1923 and 1964 are SD40-2 units. Units are based at Eads, Colorado, on the former Missouri Pacific RR Towner Line. Photo October 10, 2022. ©2022 Chip



Horses ran as Colorado Pacific RR units CXR 1923 and 1964, SD40-2, rolled east into Eads, CO, December 4, 2022. Locomotives carried Santa into Eads for 'Merry on Maine' holiday festival. ©2022 Chip

## Denver RTD R Line Light Rail Derailed in Aurora Sept 21, 2022 - Resumed Service Nov 2, 2022.



Workers were busy after dark on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, rerailing Denver Regional Transit District (RTD) light rail cars 316 and 286 after they derailed at 3:45 PM that afternoon. 24 passengers were aboard and three folks injured were taken to a nearby Aurora hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Rerailing operations by Denver RTD personnel were underway over night at South Sable Blvd and East Exposition Avenue in Aurora, Colorado. Car 316 (lead car) was completely off the double track line landed on the sidewalk against a retaining wall! Early morning, September 22nd; Car 286 had been rerailed and removed from the accident scene. Car 316 was totally off the rails on the sidewalk being attended to by RTD.

Surveillance video showed the commuter train exceeded the 10 MPH speed restriction on the tight curve in the middle of the highway intersection.



Denver RTD R-Line through Aurora was still closed to light rail trains as of early November 2022. Damaged catenary pole was removed the first week of November 2022. Nov 23rd workers were preparing catenary foundation for a new upright support. Cars 316 and 286 were off the rails at South Sable Blvd and East Exposition Avenue near Aurora Metro Center Station, Aurora, CO, September 21, 2022. Note car 286 (right) was jacked up and was being eased back onto the track. ©2022 Chip

## **The Rail Report Electronic Version starts January 2023**

**Author / photographer: Chip**

**Published: December 2022**

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Board of Directors decided in August 2022 to deliver the Rail Report via electronic means. Effective January 2023 members will receive The Rail Report by e-mail on a monthly basis.

The board thanks Bruce Nall for his 25-years editing the Rail Report. His expertise has provided members with timely news and club activities over the years.



Photo - Foster Townsend Rail Logistics 1515 at Budweiser Plant Fort Collins, CO, January 3, 2019.

## **Nominating Committee Report**

Nominating Committee Report by Andy Dell and Dave Schaaf

As the year comes to a close, the election was held at the annual business meeting in December. Officers Andy Dell, President; Dave Schaaf, Vice President; Steve Subber, Secretary; and Keith Jensen, Treasurer were voted in for another term. Denny Leonard and Nathan Holmes were nominated from the floor and were voted in for a two-year term along with Kirk Thode who was submitted by the nominating committee in the December Rail Report.

We would like to thank all of the officers and board members, completing their term for their service this year. That includes officers Andy Dell, President; Dave Schaaf, Vice President; Steve Subber, Secretary; and Keith Jensen, Treasurer. In addition, board members Debbie MacDonald, Nathan Holmes, and Pat Mauro are completing their 2-year term in the year 2023.