

**March 2024**

## **RAIL REPORT**

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rocky Mountain Railroad  
Historical Foundation

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**Issue 759**

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### **March 12th meeting at Barnes Hall ---**

Bill Jones will present "Colorado's Classic Consolidations" focusing on the origins, development and evolution of the Denver & Rio Grande's most numerous narrow-gauge locomotive type. Initially, the D&RG used tiny 2-4-0, 2-6-0 and 4-4-0s on the easy grades south of Denver. When the rails turned west into the mountains a heavier, more powerful locomotive was required. Baldwin had perfected the 2-8-0 wheel arrangement in 1866 for steep grades and this "Consolidation" type was first delivered in 1877. Over the next five years, 152 2-8-0 locomotives were constructed with 124 built by Baldwin and 28 built by Grant. Most of the initial group were Class 56, having 56,000 lbs weight on the drivers, followed by Class 60 with 59,300 lbs and Class 70 with 64,000 pounds.

Most of the original Class 56 engines were sold or scrapped in the early 1900's. When the modern Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad was created in 1923, 63 of the now 40 year old Class 60 and 70 locomotives were still on the roster (plus 13 on the Rio Grande Southern) for a total of 76 serviceable out of 99 constructed! But with the advent of modern 2-8-2 power in the 1920's most of these would soon be retired and scrapped, save for a few used for light rail branch line service. Of the Class 60 only three survive today -- Grant 223 and Baldwins 268 and 278 as display locomotives. Three of the original Class 70 survive, 400 (340) and 409 (RGS 41) both at Knotts Berry Farm and 406 (346) at the Colorado RR Museum, all still serviceable.

**We meet in person for a no cost show at 7:30 pm in Barnes Hall, on the south side of the church at 2950 S. University Boulevard Denver, Colorado. Or Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86251105134?pwd=VWRwRUVCbVoyTzhwMWhYbm5scTlqdz09> Meeting ID: 862 5110 5134 Passcode: 496652

## Upcoming Events:

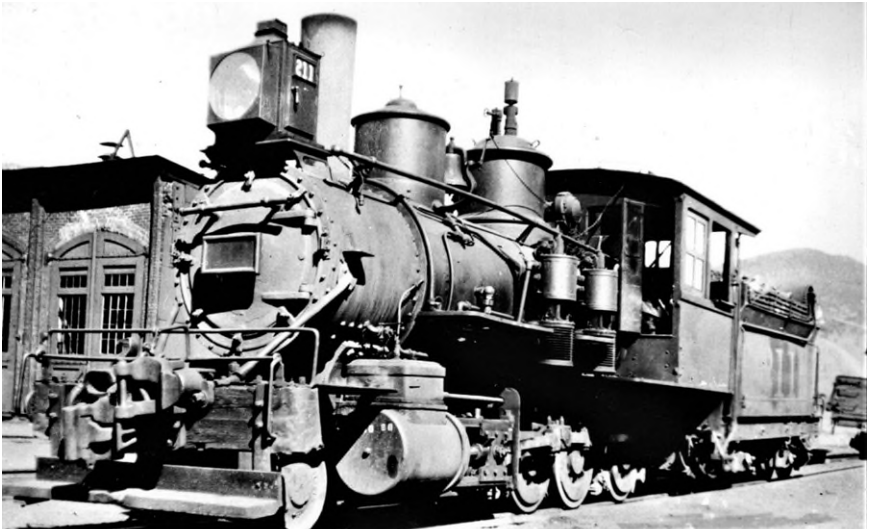
April 9 meeting with program on C&TS 40 years ago by Earl Knoob.

The Colorado Railroad Museum will have a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the California Zephyr on March 23rd, 2024. They may have the cab of Rio Grande diesel F-unit 5771 open for tours that day.

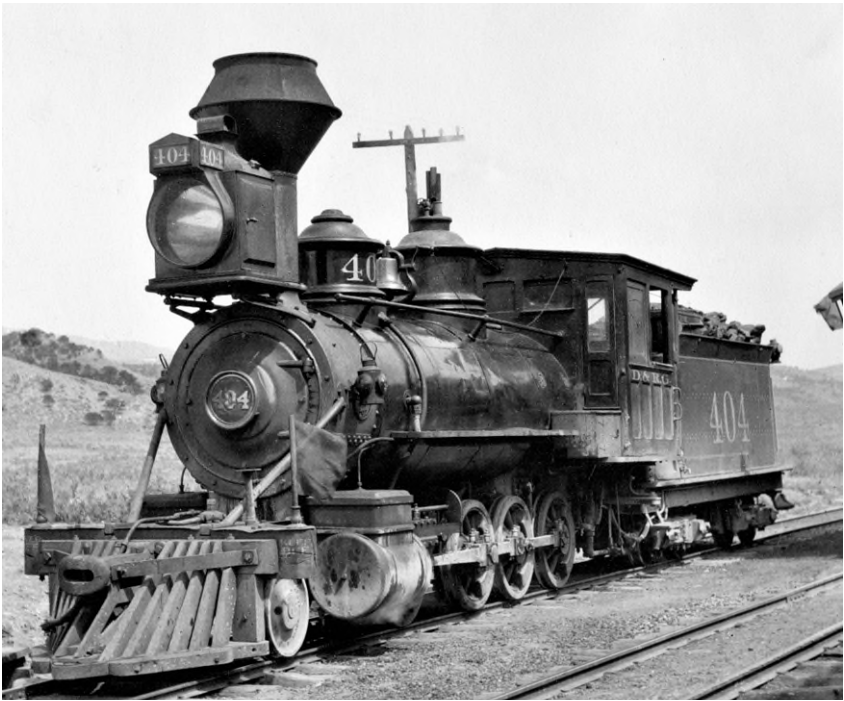
Amtrak's Winter Park Express started Friday, January 12, 2024. It will run Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Denver Union Station to Winter Park Ski Area, Colorado. Last run will be March 31st.

Rocky Mountain Train Show - Spring 2024 on April 6th & 7th  
National Western Complex 4655 Humboldt St. Denver, CO 80216  
Sat 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - Pre-Registered TCA/NMRA Members  
Sat 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM - Public  
Sun 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM - Public - - -  
May 19, likely date of the annual Club Picnic at the CRRM.

April - May 2024 CPKC Announces 2024 Steam Tour Schedule Dates  
<https://www.cpkcr.com/en/media/CPKC-2024-Steam-Tour-Schedule-Dates>



Grant built 211 is the well-worn dual gauge switcher in Salida in 1920, and long past its glory days of polished brass and gold pinstripes. The sand dome is still recognizable as a Grant, but 40 years of rebuilding has made it almost indistinguishable from the Baldwin Class 60's. Believed to be an Otto Perry photo. From the Bissinger Collection.



Legendary railroader and photographer Fred Jukes found Class 70 #404 resting in 1902. The locomotive is showing every one of its 21 years helping heavy freights up the grueling 4% grades of Marshall Pass. Fred Jukes not only took the photo but developed this original print.

## **President's Column**

### **Membership Renewal Update**

Most members have sent in their dues to renew for the 2024 year. I sent out a reminder email in early February and many responded leaving us with roughly 10% not responding. Some applications are still trickling in via snail mail and those checks will probably be deposited sometime in March or early April once our treasurer has time to process them. There are several photo charters in late February and early March that he is attending along with several other of our members. We are all volunteers in this organization taking time out of our own busy schedules, so please be patient and they will be processed as time permits.

Seniority numbers will be recomputed sometime in March or early April as time permits. Once those are all completed, I will print the membership cards and get those out in the snail mail. Thank you for your understanding

as we don't have paid full-time staff to do any items relating to membership, the newsletter or any other aspect of the club.

## **2024 Mini Grant Applications**

2024 marks the 10th anniversary of our Mini Grant program. The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation sponsored our first Mini Grant program in 2015 and has done so every year since.

Do you know of a railroad history-related project that could use a small grant for this summer? The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation is looking for individuals or organizations who have a summer project that could use up to \$1000. Full details and the application form can be found on our website:

[www.rockymtnrclub.org/index.htm](http://www.rockymtnrclub.org/index.htm)

Applications must be received by USPS or email no later than April 30, 2024. The board will review applications at the May board meeting, and the 2024 recipients will be announced in June 2024.

## **In Memory of**

Richard "Dick" Lehman, club seniority number 247, passed away November 4th following a fall. He was an avid narrow-gauge fan and worked for C.D.O.T. for most of his career. He was heavily involved in the widening and raising project of I-70 through Glenwood Canyon in the 1990's. His grandfather was an engineer for the D&RGW out of Gunnison which helped Dick gain an interest in trains at an early age.

If anyone knows of a member that has recently passed away, please email us at [rails@rockymtnrclub.org](mailto:rails@rockymtnrclub.org) and send us any details so that we may recognize them in this column.

## Amtrak California Zephyr Derailed by Milk Truck



Amtrak California Zephyr lead unit 816, P40DC, was badly damaged after hitting a milk truck at County Road 63 grade crossing and derailed onto its side January 31, 2024. Engineer was badly injured. ©2024 Chip

Amtrak's California Zephyr, train 6, the eastbound Zephyr tragically struck a loaded milk truck trailer January 29, 2024 about 10:30 PM about 40 miles northeast of Denver, CO, on BNSF's Brush Subdivision. Incident happened east of Keenesburg, CO, at County Road 63 grade crossing.

The train derailed, Amtrak 816 struck and turned onto the engineer side at the Williams Keenesburg Gas Plant switch. The 42-year old engineer had life threatening injuries. Three passengers were also taken to a hospital and released the next day.

BNSF had Hulcher and their maintenance of way crews on the scene January 30th making progress with the cleanup effort. AMTK 816 had to be re-railed. Hulcher crews carried a sleeper across the derailment site so it could be re-railed with the back half of the train. The front truck of the transition sleeper behind the baggage car was still on the ground, although the car was upright.

AMTK 816 was leading the train. The second unit was AMTK 41.

BNSF reopened the Brush Subdivision on the evening of January 30th. Track repairs continued into early February. BNSF installed a new switch at Williams Keenesburg gas plant on February 5, 2024.

Amtrak and BNSF Railway have sued (Feb 13, 2024) the driver of a semi-truck of milk, as well as the truck's owner, over the Jan. 29 grade-crossing collision that derailed the eastbound California Zephyr near Keenesburg, CO.

**Amtrak 160, the 50th Anniversary Unit, seen here on California Zephyr in eastern Colorado.**



Amtrak 160 the 50th Anniversary painted Phase III (Pepsi Can scheme) P42DC handled the 5-hour late California Zephyr on February 15, 2024. Train sped past BNSF's Roggen, CO, on the Brush Subdivision. ©2024 Chip



Fog had lifted February 15, 2024 as Amtrak 160 Phase III unit sped the late running California Zephyr past Lochbuie, CO, on BNSF's Brush Subd. ©2024 Chip

## Front Range Passenger District (FRPD) Rail News

On December 13, 2023, Front Range Passenger Rail District's General Manager Andy Karsian, Governor Jared Polis, Federal Railroad Administrator Amit Bose, CDOT Executive Director Shoshana Lew, and Colorado Springs Mayor Yemi Mobolade gathered at the History Colorado Center to announce FRPD's acceptance into the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification Development Program (CIDP). The FRPR District was awarded \$500,000 to advance Front Range Passenger Rail's development. This award signals preferential positioning for the FRPR District to access additional federal funding opportunities to make passenger rail a reality along the Front Range.

## BNSF Logistics Park Hudson, CO, Opened to Intermodal Trains



BNSF intermodal train at Littleton, CO, December 2020. First train to depart Logistics Center Hudson, CO, down the Joint Line happened February 7, 2024. BNSF train symbol S-HUDLHG1-06A. ©2020 Chip

## PV Sierra Hotel Ran February 2024



The Royal Gorge Route hosted passengers aboard PV Sierra Hotel for the trip between Cañon City and Parkdale, CO, on February 6, 2024. This was the first trip with passengers for the Sierra Hotel dome lounge sleeper since the car arrived on the Cañon City & Royal Gorge RR in October 2021. ©2024 Chip



PV Sierra Hotel was at Parkdale, Colorado, February 1, 2024 - first trip through the Royal Gorge-! Test run for Sierra Hotel dome lounge sleeper. Car was built by Budd for Chicago, Burlington & Quincy named Silver Lounge. ©2024 Chip

## Railroading Heritage of Midwest America News

Even with the crews taking time for family and friends over the holiday months, things have been moving along steadily at RRHMA-Silvis.



New parts from Strasburg Railroad and Steam Services of America arrived for new superheater units to be built. New Springs are being installed in #6936, #4014's tender primed and ready for rebuild, #3985's flue sheet removed, and so much more! Info and photo courtesy RRHMA

## Amtrak Conductor Brad Swartzwelter set to retire later in 2024



Amtrak conductor Brad Swartzwelter will retire after 30-years of working freight and Amtrak passenger service this year. He was instrumental in convincing Amtrak to operate the Winter Park Express. Brad hired out on the Burlington Northern RR in 1994. ©2024 Chip



**BNSF Railway**

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You're looking at the very first train to depart from the startup of a private intermodal facility at our Logistics Center Hudson in Hudson, Colorado. With the opening of this new facility, we're ready to provide direct service between the Southern California ports and central Colorado to support our customers looking to increase their presence in the growing Denver market.

The development and opening of the facility were made possible through collaboration among BNSF, U.S. Rail and Logistics (USRL), and ConGlobal. Thanks to our employees and our partners in this endeavor. Great work on bringing the vision to reality!

With 430 acres and easy access to I-76 and BNSF's main line, Logistics Center Hudson has room for multiple shovel-ready, rail-served sites that can be customized to meet any customer's needs. Learn more about BNSF Logistics Centers at <https://bit.ly/3HU9LuW>.

[#Denver](#) [#Colorado](#) [#freight](#) [#logistics](#)  
[#economicdevelopment](#)



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8 comments 5 shares

# Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Information

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Please use this address for legal, commercial, Foundation donations, and general business:

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## Club Officers

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Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Steve Subber
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

## Club Directors

Jim Ehernberger, Denny Leonard, Andrew Ludasi,  
Debbie MacDonald, Kirk Thode, Nathan Zachman

## Membership Information

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained online at [www.rockymtnrrclub.org](http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org) or by sending the annual dues to the Club address:

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Membership

PO Box 2391

Denver, CO 80201-2391

Regular membership dues are \$35.00 with email delivery of the Rail Report or \$50 if a printed, mailed *Rail Report* is desired.

Contributing membership is \$55.00.

Sustaining membership is \$75.00.

Patron membership is \$100.00.

An associate membership for spouses and children is \$20.00 additional.

Members joining after June may send a payment for half of the dues level they wish to join at for the remainder of the year. Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

## Board Meetings

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and Zoom meeting information.

**Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:**

Chip Sherman, Editor

Email: [rails@rockymtnrrclub.org](mailto:rails@rockymtnrrclub.org)

USPS Mail:

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Rail Report

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