



May 2024

RAIL REPORT

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rocky Mountain Railroad
Historical Foundation

Issue 761

No May meeting at Barnes Hall --- annual picnic instead.

Upcoming Events: Sunday, May 19th

Club Picnic and Steam Up at the Colorado Railroad Museum

The Club has gotten an opportunity for another daytime picnic at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden. On Sunday afternoon, May 19th, we will have the use of the pavilion at the Museum, and their train will be steam-powered that weekend. The catered barbecue meal with side dishes and beverages will be served at about 2:30 pm and our group train ride should be after the last public train that leaves at 3 pm.

As with any event using antique equipment, there is the possibility of changes to the engines and cars that are available.

You and everyone in your party will need to check-in at the ticket window in the Museum store, so please get here a little early and head to the depot building. We will verify that you are on the list of paid participants and then put a wristband on you. The wristband is required for admission, our train ride, and your meal. Please wear your Rocky Club name tag if you have one. The Museum may have more than one steam engine hot that day for pictures and may also be running one or more of the Galloping Gooses, so there are more reasons to arrive early. Tickets are \$45 per person including the lunch buffet with your choice of BBQ brisket or BBQ pulled chicken. We also plan to have burnt end baked beans, coleslaw, slider buns, individual chip packages, cookies, and Pork Barrel BBQ sauce. There will be water and soft drinks provided. Order tickets on-line by May 10th and pay with a credit card through PayPal on the Club website at: www.rockymtnrrclub.org

Please email rails@rockymtnrrclub.org the attendees name(s) and dinner choice(s) of BBQ Brisket or BBQ pulled chicken after placing your PayPal order.

Note: Tickets will not be available after May 10th or at the Museum. This event will take the place of our regular monthly meeting for May.

April - May 2024 CPKC Announces 2024 Steam Tour Schedule Dates

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

Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR Opens on May 25
2024 Summer Season runs until October 19, 2024

U.P. Big Boy 4014 will depart from Cheyenne, Wyoming, on Sunday, June 30, enroute to Roseville, California.

Amtrak Winter Park Express



Amtrak's Winter Park Express train set left Denver, CO, on April 3, 2024. Amtrak 174 in the Phase VII paint scheme, and 161 Phase I paint scheme were part of the five units leaving Denver Union Station. ©2024 Chip

Amtrak's Winter Park Express (WPE), ended the 2024 ski season March 31, 2024. However, one trip on March 29th didn't get to Winter Park Ski Resort on account a rockslide at milepost 44.6 between Rollinsville and Tolland, CO.

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Amtrak 174 West came across the recent rockslide and notified Union Pacific's dispatcher at Omaha, NE. The five car Superliner equipped train was backed to Rollinsville, CO, where the two locomotives ran around their train and returned to Denver, Colorado.

That same day, Amtrak train 5 was stopped at Crescent, CO, due to the UP Moffat Tunnel line rockslide. It was decided to return the train to Denver. The train was backed all the way into Denver Union Station. The eastbound Amtrak train 6 was held and turned at Grand Junction, Colorado.

Union Pacific quickly cleared the rockslide at milepost 44.6 and rail traffic resumed on Saturday, March 30th.

The 2024 Winter Park Express ridership was robust. Denver based Amtrak train crews kept the trains rolling to the delight of skiers. We look forward to the Winter Park Express returning for the 2025 season.



Amtrak had five locomotives and 13-cars departing Denver, CO, at Prospect Junction on April 3, 2024. The Winter Park Express train set was added to the California Zephyr, train #5, for its trip to Emeryville, CA. ©2024 Chip



Amtrak 23, P42DC, led 30, 174 with Phase VII color scheme, 161 Phase I paint scheme, and 7 along with 13-cars on Amtrak's California Zephyr at Rocky Siding west of Arvada, CO, on April 3, 2024. ©2024 Chip

Jim Ehernberger Honored With Award by Dave Schaaf



Jim Ehernberger at right, next to Robert Holzweiss who is president of the R&LHS. Ed Dickens Jr. sits at left, UP 4014 in background.

The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society was founded in 1921 and is the oldest organization in North America which promotes research and

encourages preservation of documentation and photographs of business history, finance, labor history, and biography as well as the technology of railroading. An awards program recognizes those who make outstanding contributions in such pursuits. Most significant among those awards is the Gerald M. Best Senior Achievement Award, named in honor of Jerry Best, and generally given annually for significant and long-standing contributions to the writing, preservation and interpretations of railroad history. James L. Ehernberger received this award on April 20, 2024, at the Cheyenne steam shop.

As a teenager, Jim's involvement with railroad history began over 70 years ago by photographing and documenting the last days of steam on the Union Pacific, Colorado & Southern, Rio Grande, and Burlington lines in Wyoming and Colorado. That expanded with him collecting his own and other photographer's historic views of railroad operations primarily in the west, but all over the country.

Over the past 25 years, to ensure that these views are accessible to future researchers, Jim's photo collection of more than 100,000 negatives, over 50,000 photos and several thousand color transparencies has been gifted to the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming. Also included are thousands of railroad-produced publications, manuals, rule books, timetables, maps, plans and myriad other research files and documents. This work is still going on.

Jim's career with Union Pacific from 1953-1988 consisted of over 40 different positions including call boy, crew dispatcher, secretary to the superintendent of the Wyoming Division, train dispatcher and manager of rules and safety! This and his own extensive research provided information to author, co-author, compile and produce almost 70 books and dozens of articles, often illustrated with his own photographs. He is regularly cited and credited for information and images by other authors and editors, from his first photos in Trains Magazine in 1955 to several books by Lucius Beebe to photos still appearing today in all types of publications.

On May 17, 1953, on the very first Rocky Mountain RR Club steam excursion with the Union Pacific, Jim met members Richard Kindig, Otto Perry, and several other well-known photographers. This led to his immediate joining of the Club, and later serving multiple stints as president, director, and other offices over many decades. He is again a Board member this year. He has also served as president, director and business manager of the U.P. Historical Society, is a life member of the Colorado RR Museum, and maintains membership in a dozen other RR historical organizations.

Federal Railroad Administration - Two Person Crew Size Rule Issued April 2024



A BNSF crew change. Railroads had proposed one man operation on their lengthy freight trains. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is finalizing rules as of April 2024 to require two-man crews on most freight trains across the USA. ©2024 Chip

Train Crew Size Safety Requirements

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT). ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The FRA is establishing minimum safety requirements for the size of train crews depending on the type of operation. This final rule requires railroad operations to have a minimum of two crew members except for certain identified one-person train crew operations that do not pose significant safety risks to railroad employees, the public, or the environment. This final rule includes requirements for railroads seeking to continue certain existing one-person train crew operations and a special approval process for railroads seeking to initiate certain new one-person train crew operations. This final rule also requires each railroad receiving special approval for a one-person train crew operation to submit to FRA an annual report summarizing the safety of the operation. Issued on April 2, 2024

More on NPPD Power Station Rail Service

Regarding the Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railway (NKCR) photo of a fly-ash train in the April Rail Report: Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) built an 18-mile spur north from Wallace, Neb., on BN's Hi-Line in the mid-1970s to serve the new Gerald Gentleman Station south of Sutherland. This also required upgrading the BN from Wallace to Sterling, Colo., to handle coal trains. The first coal train came through Grant, Neb., on June 10, 1978. The plant began commercial operation in April 1979 but even before it was finished work began on a second unit, which went into commercial operation in January 1982. To gain competitive access for coal hauling NPPD built a 9.3-mile spur from the north off Union Pacific's North Platte Valley line in 1993-94. UP brings in the coal now. NKCR's midportion is out of service between Wallace and Loomis, Neb., although they do ship grain from Loomis east via Holdrege and store cars west of there.

NPPD's Sheldon Station was built in 1958-63 north of Hallam, Neb., on the Rock Island, near where the Rocky Mountain Rocket derailed on June 25, 1954. It began as an experimental nuclear plant but since 1961 has generated power with natural gas and coal. After the Rock Island shutdown in March 1980, UP began bringing coal trains up the former Rock Island main line from a connection at Fairbury, Neb., which continues to this day, along with serving grain shippers. In recent years Monolith has built a carbon black/hydrogen plant between Hallam and Sheldon Station. Hallam itself was heavily damaged in a tornado on May 22, 2004. Thanks - Michael M. Bartels



The Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railway once a week train returned from the Nebraska Public Power District Plant at Sutherland, Nebraska, March 15, 2024. Former Burlington Northern Hi Line connection at Wallace, NE. ©2024 Chip

High Winds Delay Amtrak California Zephyr 21 hours



Amtrak 174, P42DC Phase VII paint scheme, led the 21-hours late train 6, California Zephyr, where it met a westbound unit UP oil train and Amtrak train 5 at Rocky Siding west of Arvada, CO, April 7, 2024. Wind gusts of 96 MPH was recorded at Coal Creek Canyon over the blustery weekend. Amtrak train 6 was held overnight at Fraser, CO, released/recrewed Sunday afternoon about 1:00 PM-! ©2024 Chip

UP Steam Program Briefed at Rocky Mountain Train Show April 2024



Ed Dickens, Senior Manager Heritage Operations, presented a UP 4014 Big Boy boiler work program at the Rocky Mountain Train Show held at the National Western Complex, Denver, CO, April 6, 2024. ©2024 Chip

Private Varnish Visits the Mile High City



Private varnish made a circle trip from Chicago around the Western USA in April 2024. PV's Bella Vista now renamed Stanley (dome sleeper lounge), MKT 403 to be renamed Lucky, and Caritas came into Denver Union Station track 5 for a three-day layover starting April 11, 2024. Dome on the Stanley rolled past the Denver Union Station neon sign at sunset on April 11th. ©2024 Chip.

Private cars came off Amtrak's train 6, the California Zephyr at Denver Union Station on April 11, 2024. Three cars were Caritas business car once owned by Clark Johnson. Car now owned by the 261 Group. Other two cars were the MKT 403 being renamed Lucky, and Stanley (formerly Bella Vista) dome sleeper lounge car. The Caritas had the 261 Group crew that provided services to the chartered two cars. Friends of 261 President Steve Sandberg was aboard keeping the epic Western trip running smoothly.

Steve Sandberg is the Chief Operating Officer of the Friends of the 261 (owners of steam locomotive Milwaukee Road 261). This group acquired the Caritas business car from the Iowa Pacific bankruptcy sale.



261 Group young fella talked with lady aboard former MKT 403 business car recently renamed Lucky. Three private varnish cars laid over at Denver Union Station, CO, for three days, April 11-14, 2024. Caritas is owned and operated by the 261 Group based in Minneapolis, MN. ©2024 Chip

Rocky Mountaineer Adds Horizon Locomotives for the 2024 Season

Rocky Mountaineer began training trips in April 2024 for the upcoming Rails to the Red Rocks excursions. Two Horizon Rail units were delivered by Union Pacific via North Platte, NE, to 36th Street Yard on April 9, 2024. The next day, April 10th HZRX 8700, SD40-2M, and HZRX 187, SD18M, were added to RMRX 8020 and 8021 for a training run from Denver to Glenwood Springs, CO.

In 2023 Rocky Mountaineer leased two Union Pacific SD70M locomotives for several trips. The RMRX units were not always available due to various mechanical issues.

Horizon Rail 8600 was built for the Atlantic Coast Line as ACL 1024, a SD45. Today's SD40M-2 is ex-UP 2676, once SP 8600, and has quite the history starting life as ACL 1024, a SD45, before becoming SCL 2000 and CSXT 8900.



Rocky Mountaineer ran a training trip west from Denver on April 10, 2024. Note the two Horizon Rail units: HZRX 8600, SD40M-2, and HZRX 187, SD18M, at Rocky Siding west of Arvada, CO. The blue Horizon Rail units arrived in Denver via Union Pacific's North Platte, NE, to Denver train the day before. RMRX 8021 and 8020 bracketed the Horizon Rail locomotives. ©2024 Chip

New Amtrak Phase VII Paint Scheme



Amtrak's California Zephyr had two locomotives: 138 and 82, both sporting the Phase VII paint scheme on April 13, 2024. Train was on time (new Denver departure time 8:46 AM as of April 8th) at Plainview, CO. ©2024 Rob Winzurk

Large Colorado Pacific Units Entered Service in April of 2024



Colorado Pacific RR has painted eight former BNSF units. The predominantly blue paint scheme features the Colorado State flag. CXR 316 was at Alamosa, Colorado, on April 1, 2024. ©2024 Chip



Colorado Pacific Rio Grande Railroad herald is backlit and hangs in the former Denver & Rio Grande Western RR freight house at Alamosa, CO. April 1, 2024. ©2024 Chip

Rio Grande Dome Model Restored at CRRM



Colorado Railroad Museum roundhouse crew restored the dome car model and placed it atop the monument that was originally in Glenwood Canyon, CO. Re-dedication was held at the CRRM on March 23, 2024. Thanks to the efforts of Darrell Arndt (then employed by Colorado Department of Transportation) and others this monument was moved from Glenwood Canyon to Golden, CO. in 1985. ©2024 Chip

UP Intermodal Train Piled up at Chappell, NE April 14, 2024

Sunday afternoon, April 14, 2024, eastbound Union Pacific RR hot intermodal train from Lathrop, California, headed to Global 2, Chicago, IL, piled up 35 cars by the Chappell, NE, grain elevators. The west side of the town was evacuated and US Highway 30 closed for a couple of hours that day. Residents were able to return to their homes about sunset.

Union Pacific RR was investigating the derailment that blocked both main lines on their Sidney Subdivision. The incident piled up cars next to the Farmers Elevator Company FECX 7558 switcher.

Crawford Hotel Great Hall Renovation

Denver Union Station's Great Hall, Cooper Lounge, and 8,000 square feet of meeting & event space will also be reinvigorated with new furniture, light fixtures, and more.

While under renovation - Denver Union Station will continue to host dozens of free community events, including, the popular Yappy Hours, and

guests can experience some of Denver's award-winning cuisine and cocktails even as Denver Union Station's Great Hall is undergoing re-imagination.



Denver Union Station Great Hall under renovation April 14, 2024. Amtrak passengers still have seating on the west side of the Great Hall. Changes include a new lobby for the Crawford Hotel with live music and cocktails, updates to the hotel's 112 rooms, fresh furniture, lighting and an update to retail in the Great Hall, a renovation of the Cooper Lounge and more. ©2024 Chip

Abilene & Smokey Valley Developments

The former ATSF 3415, the Abilene & Smokey Valley RR Association has established a project fund at the Community Foundation of Dickinson County and have about \$79,000 pledged with hopefully more on the way. We had a start-up meeting Friday, April 26, 2024, and hope to start de-construction on Apr 27th. Our goal is to have the money raised and the work done by no later than July 2026 in time for the 250th U.S. birthday party.

We are concurrently working on getting our GE-44 ton locomotive refurbished in time for D-Day 2024. We have received new wheels for it, the axles and wheels are in Durango for installation, and we are working on getting ready for paint and new glass. It was the 6th one built by GE, it still has the original CAT D17000 motors, and after its first owner in Wichita, KS, it went to San Bernardino where it spent the remainder of its career in the Army before retiring in 1972, it then went to Superior NE, then on to Abilene. We are developing it as an Ike tribute since it was in the army the same time he was and when he was President.

Regards, Ross Boelling, President & General Manager.

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Membership Information

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

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Membership

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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:

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rail Report

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