



NRHS



WISCONSIN CHAPTER

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SPARKS AND CINDERS

Our purpose as members of Wisconsin Chapter—National Railway Historical Society is to gather, preserve and disseminate information, both historic and current, pertaining to railroading in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest.

Preserving Wisconsin Railroad History for 75 Years

Visit the Chapter Webpage www.nrhswis.org



Cape Cod Central FL9 #2026 in New Haven paint on August 28, 2020 having crossed the Bourne Bridge
Photo by Doug Scott

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Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming chapter events

January 3 2025 Cape Cod Railroading by Doug Scott
February 7 2025 Chapter Annual Meeting and Brian Buchanan Abandonments
March 7 2025 A Special Look Back 50 Years with Tom Hoffmann

Monthly meetings are held in the lower level of the North Shore Congregational Church at 7330 N Santa Monica Dr. in Fox Point. The church is handicap accessible. For more up to date information on meetings and speakers, and also any weather cancellations, check the chapter's webpage at www.nrhswis.org.

Doors open by 7:00 pm, so arrive early to socialize. Meetings start at 7:30pm sharp. Please bring a friend! Our meetings are live-streamed on the Zoom platform. Connection details are shared with chapter members and other interested persons via email the day of the meeting, or before. To ensure you are made aware of this info, we must have a working email address on file - send yours to president@nrhswis.org.

If you have a program idea please contact Program Chair Dave Nelson at engine1385@aol.com

The Big Picture is your page!

We've changed the format of the Sparks & Cinders back page, giving us room to run a large photo. Member submissions are solicited. Please send one or two of your outstanding pictures to Keith Schmidt, editor@nrhswis.org.

Sparks & Cinders is published by and for the members of the Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., National Railway Historical Society monthly except for July and August. The Chapter meets at the North Shore Congregational Church, 7330 N Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point, Wisconsin, on the first Friday of each month, except June, July and August, at 7:30 p.m. The Wisconsin Chapter is a not-for-profit corporation, affiliated with the National Railway Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Society, organized to preserve the history of railroading in Wisconsin and the surrounding area. Additional information is available on the chapter's website, www.nrhswis.org.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone having an interest in any aspect of railroading who is also a member of the NRHS. Paying \$20 annually to the Chapter will entitle you receive Sparks & Cinders. Paying the National dues of \$50 to the NRHS will entitle you to membership and subscriptions to the NRHS Bulletin and NRHS News. Full NRHS membership is required to participate in chapter business discussions and to vote in annual chapter elections. All address changes should be sent to Mike Yuhas membership@nrhswis.org (or via USPS at PO Box 070758 Milwaukee, WI 53207).

Wisconsin Chapter officers are: President Keith Schmidt, Vice-President Ward Wells ; Tom Marcussen, Secretary; Tara Grudzielanek, Treasurer. Directors: Dan Grudzielanek, Mike Yuhas, Andrew Roach, Ward Wells and Neal Wegner.

Contributions to Sparks & Cinders should be sent to Editor Keith Schmidt at editor@nrhswis.org (or USPS at PO Box 070758 Milwaukee, WI 53207) by the 15th of the month to be considered for the following month's publication.

All original material published in Sparks & Cinders may be reprinted in other railfan publications provided credit is given to "Sparks & Cinders, Wisconsin Chapter, NRHS." If an author is indicated for the item or article, credit must also be given to the author. The views, opinions, and comments published in Sparks & Cinders are those of the authors and do not reflect the policies of the Wisconsin Chapter or the National Railway Historical Society. Copyright ©2022, Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., NRHS.

Meeting Summary for December 6 2024

Introduction

President Keith Schmidt ran this meeting from our in-person meeting site in the basement of the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point. There were complimentary snacks, courtesy of Barry Becker, at the back table for in-person attendees to enjoy. Recording started at 7:30 pm. There were then 29 devices in the Zoom virtual meeting room. Keith started the meeting at 7:31 pm. He noted that this is the last meeting of the calendar year 2024. The next meeting will be in January 2025, which will be our 75th anniversary year.

Announcements

The first order of 75th anniversary apparel has come in. Keith is distributing it at this meeting. There is still time to order for the next delivery.

Keith apologized for the lack of a caption on the front-page photo in December Sparks & Cinders. Bob Gallegos took that photo. He will identify it during his presentation later. [It shows two Southern Railway of British Columbia (Formerly BC Hydro) EMD SW-1200 end-cab switch engines and a caboose on their Abbotsford road freight. It was taken at their Canadian Pacific interchange yard in Abbotsford, British Columbia—ESE of Vancouver—in 1989.]

Members should watch for announcements of 75th anniversary events. These will start appearing / happening in April or May 2025.

The Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train will run north from Chicago to Milwaukee tomorrow night (Saturday, December 7). It will continue on from Milwaukee WNW to Portage on Sunday, December 8.

East Troy Electric Railroad will operate their Christmas Parade Train tomorrow night—Saturday, December 7.

Membership Chair Mike Yuhas took over to thank all of those members who have already renewed their membership for 2025. He asked all of the other members to please renew promptly. There are, as usual, three options to do so. The first way is very easy. Our treasurer Tara Grudzielanek is here tonight. Go to the

From the President

back of the room, and pay the 20.00 in annual dues (by cash or check) tonight. The second way is on-line payment via our website at nrhswis.org. That second option includes an extra \$1.00 fee for credit card processing costs. The third way is to send a \$20.00 check to Wisconsin Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 070758, Milwaukee, WI 53207. The same three options apply to new memberships. If you like what you see here, please consider joining us as a Wisconsin Chapter member. Dues payments support Chapter meetings like this one, other activities and publications. Your support is much appreciated. You will receive 10 issues of our monthly newsletter Sparks & Cinders, plus admission to members-only events, and member discounts on other events and merchandise.

Our next meeting will be on Friday, January 3, 2025. The subject will be the railroads and maritime traffic around Cape Cod in eastern Massachusetts.

Presentation

Keith Schmidt introduced our presenter Bob Gallegos. Bob is a long-term member, and a 12-year co-worker with Keith at Walthers. Bob took over at 7:38 pm. There were then 33 devices in the Zoom meeting room.

Bob had organized his presentation into three parts. Part One covered the 25 years from Bob's age 16 introduction to Canadian railroading in 1980 up to the formalization of border crossings (passport required) in 2005. We were treated to a number of (mostly still) images from pretty much all of the rail-served parts of Canada (except for the Maritime Provinces and the far north). Then there was a gap of 19 years, up to the current year of 2024.

Part Two covered his latest trip, to SW Ontario, the Thanksgiving week of November 24-30, 2024. Images started in Windsor, across the Detroit River from Detroit, Michigan. They continued to the ENE along both the CN and CP main lines, with a number of short line pictures, to Toronto. These lines were very busy, with both lots of freight and lots of passengers.

Part Three covered Bob's summer 2024 trip to Winnipeg and surrounding parts of Manitoba. We got both CN and CP shots, short lines, the return of the CP's Empress 4-6-4 number 2816, and some shorts of the (slow and expensive) passenger train to Churchill on Hudson Bay. Part Three ended at 8:22 pm.

Each of the above three parts was followed by a question and answer session. Parts Two and Three included some high-quality full motion video.

There were 31 in-person attendees in the church basement. Zoom records show a total of 35 devices connected during the meeting. Subtracting the two devices in the church basement tonight yielded a total attendance of 64.

President Keith Schmidt repeated the above announcements. The meeting ended at 8:32 pm. The recording stopped, and the Zoom meeting room closed, at 8:35 pm. There was no on-line discussion group tonight.

Respectfully Submitted
Thomas W. Marcussen
Wisconsin Chapter Secretary

When you receive this Christmas 2024 may be a memory. We will be looking forward to the new year of 2025. 2025 is the 75th Anniversary of the chapter. That's something that has been mentioned many times recently. Thank You! For purchasing the 75th Anniversary clothing. The first order was very well received. There will be more orders placed. Mike is working on a store that would be available online to order items.

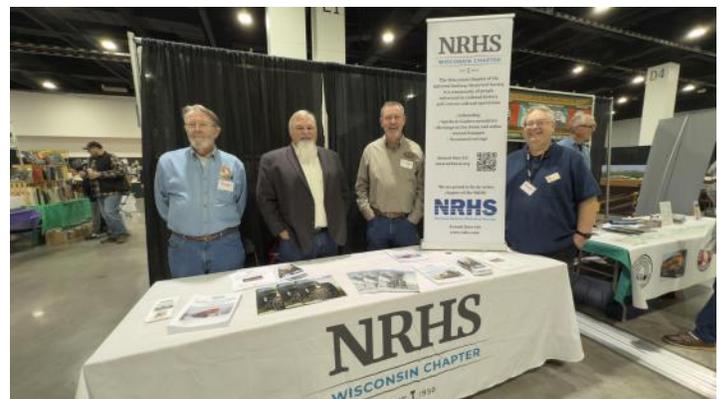
We are also planning some events for 2025. All of this will only happen with help. If you are interested in helping in any way please let me know at president@nrhswis.org. Anything you do will be appreciated.

PLEASE Check your photo albums, slides or whatever to see if you have any photos of chapter events from the past. Any event would be appreciated. Even if it's a photo of a monthly meeting let me know I would like to get some photos together for a special Sparks and Cinders edition at some point next year.

Thanks for a successful and fun 2024. Looking forward to 2025. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year

Trainfest 2024 - Chapter Booth Summary

The Chapter sponsored a table at Trainfest in the downtown Milwaukee Baird Center over the weekend of November 22-23, 2024. The table displayed fliers with information about the Wisconsin Chapter and the national organization, along with free copies of Sparks & Cinders and recent NRHS Bulletins. Chapter members Ralph McClure, Neal and Cathy Wegner, Ward Wells, Mike Yugas and Ron Zeise promoted the Chapter and NRHS.



The Wisconsin chapter booth at Trainfest 2024. The show was a success. The Baird Center downtown was an excellent venue. In the photo from left to right, Ralph McClure, Mike Yugas, Ward Wells and Keith Schmidt

Renew your Chapter Membership Today

Check your Sparks & Cinders address label. If it says your membership expiration date is 12/31/2024, it's time to renew! There are three ways to continue supporting the chapter:

1. Hand \$20 to Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek at our next meeting.
2. Send a \$20 check to Wisconsin NRHS, PO Box 070758, Milwaukee, WI 53207.
3. Renew online for \$21 at www.nrhswis.org - click the Join or Renew button.

Cape Cod Railroading by Doug Scott

NRHS Cape Cod Chapter member Doug Scott will present Cape Cod Railroading at the NRHS Wisconsin Chapter meeting on Friday, January 3.

The Covid pandemic limited travel; during this period Mr. Scott stuck close to his home on Cape Cod and extensively photographed freights operated by Massachusetts Coastal, and passenger service provided by Cape Cod Central and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. The Cape Cod Chapter owns and maintains the former New Haven station at West Barnstable; just about every train that runs on the Cape passes by the depot – and Mr. Scott captured much of the action. Also included is maritime activity through the Cape Cod Canal and around the Cape.

A smattering of railroad images taken pre-pandemic in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida will be shown.

Join us in person at North Shore Congregational Church 7330 N Santa Monica Blvd. Doors open at 7pm with the program beginning at 7:30pm. The program will also be offered remotely via Zoom. To register for the Zoom meeting please contact membership@nrhswis.org



Cape Cod Central Bourne Bridge, August 2020. *Photo by Doug Scott*



Mass Coastal energy train empties at West Barnstable, May 2020. *Photo by Doug Scott*

Wisconsin Chapter Annual Meeting Friday February 7 2025

This a reminder that the Wisconsin Chapter Annual meeting will be held on Friday February 7, 2025. This is the yearly business meeting of the chapter. At the meeting there will be elections, treasurers report and membership report.

All of the officers and board member positions are up for election. If you are interested in becoming more involved in the chapter consider running for a position. If you are interested please let me know and you will be added to ballot. Contact me at president@nrhswis.org. Nominations will also be taken at the meeting.

With this being the 75th Anniversary year of the chapter there will be several opportunities to help plan with some of the events being planned to celebrate the anniversary. We are hoping to have several events including a trip to Silvis and Railroad Heritage restoration shops. A "Wisconsin" Day at the East Troy Trolley museum. Other events may be announced at some time in the near future. Please consider helping out the chapter.

If you like the programs that you see each month lets make sure that they continue into the future and until the 100th Anniversary.

Minnesota Vikings charter Milwaukee Road #261 North Pole Express

Minnesota Vikings quarterback Sam Darnold has led his team to a run at a playoff berth this season. On Monday, Dec. 9, Darnold and the team made another kind of run: they took a ride on the North Pole Express powered by Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 at St. Paul Union Depot. Darnold and his girlfriend posed in the cab and blew the whistle of the 1944 American Locomotive Co. product.

The team chartered the entire train for players and their families, and invited 80 children from the Boys and Girls Club of the Twin Cities to take the short trip on the depot grounds. BNSF Railway assisted by moving No. 261 and the passenger equipment from its home base in Minneapolis to Union Depot.

Since 2014 the Friends of the 261/Railroading Heritage of Midwest America have operated the North Pole Express offering a 60-minute train ride on the Union Depot grounds. After departing the depot platform, the trains travel to the east end of the depot property to Santa's Workshop, a structure built by Friends volunteers. Santa then boards the train and collects letters written to him by passengers. He visits with each child on the trip back to the depot. Volunteers offer children cookies and hot chocolate in the depot head house on their return. The Vikings charter was part of the first weekend of trips, which are pulled by are pulled by No. 261 — its only operation this year. The second weekend trains are handed by Milwaukee Road E9 No. 32A to save having to keep 261 fired up for the several days between trips.

Courtesy TRAINS Newswire Firecrown Publications

East Troy Railroad Christmas Parade Train
December 7 2024



East Troy Railroad Christmas Parade Train rolls along Hwy ES towards East Troy December 7 2024 Aerial Photo by Keith Schmidt



Santa talks to those gathered at St Peters Road in East Troy on December 7 2024 Aerial Photo by Keith Schmidt

Do You Know ?

by Dave Nelson

The weekend of October 14-15, 2011, offered a "must see" experience at the downtown Amtrak station: a visit from Amtrak's 40th Anniversary train, with exhibits showing the history of Amtrak from its founding in 1971 to the present. Milwaukee was one of several stops during the anniversary year, but many bigger cities with a larger Amtrak footprint were not included -- perhaps a lingering legacy of former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson's years on the Amtrak board, during which Milwaukee saw more than its share of special Amtrak passenger cars on the Hiawatha Service trains, and the west coast Talgo trainsets and other special equipment were often on display at the station.

The locomotives on the 40th Anniversary train were NPCU (non-powered control unit) 406, formerly an F40PH in a

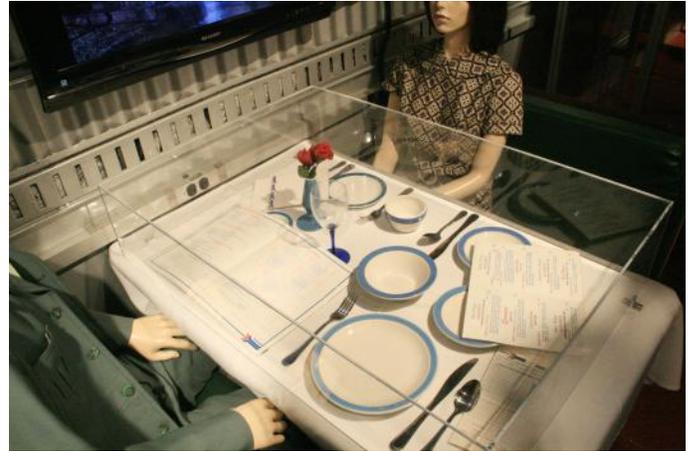


special anniversary lettering and a vintage "heritage" paint scheme, P40 822, also specially-painted; Amcafe 43386 (a rest and dining area for employees working on the train), Amdinette 85999 which served as the company store for a variety of Amtrak anniversary merchandise;



three ex-Santa Fe baggage cars 3512, 3547 and 3535, used as display cars; and an ex-UP 10-6 sleeper 10020 "Pacific Bend," again for employees serving on the train.

The displays included an Amtrak time-line, 40 years of Amtrak posters and advertising, dining car china and glassware, interior decor, and seating upholstery. Mannequins were attired in period Amtrak conductor and porter uniforms that were used in the past forty years. An



interesting collection of the diesel horns Amtrak used over the decades was included, as was a collection of Amtrak police badges from the past. Various Amtrak train consists over the 40 years were represented by HO scale models (donated by Walthers) inside clear plexiglass tubes for protection. The gift shop sold models as well as a wide variety of Amtrak attire and souvenirs. It was a great weekend to be a Milwaukee-area train enthusiast.



From the Archives

January 1955—70 Years Ago

The Soo Line and Milwaukee Road have announced complete dieselization; the Soo Line by the end of this month (Wisconsin Central only), and Milwaukee Road by January 10th (except electrified area). The C&NW is now our steam king, if you can find the steam. Pacific No. 626 was heating cars in downtown Milwaukee and the Adams local carries a steamer once a month....Gary Duckert, Eddie Wilkommen, and Dean Burnham rode the recent fantrip sponsored by the Iowa Chapter on the Southern Iowa Electric. The company only provided two crewmen; a motorman for the streetcar and a motorman for the locomotive and caboose. This gave Gary a chance to act as conductor. Eddie kept walking away with the only set of switch keys, leaving the gang stranded at times

January 1960 - 65 Years Ago

Formation of the IERM was announced. Its purpose is the preservation of traction items. Dues of \$10 a year include the newsletter "Wisconsin Railroads." Contact Harold E. Olsen, 2133 N. 62nd St., Milwaukee.

January 1965 - 60 Years Ago

Jim Scribbins reports: The last trip of the set-out sleepers on Milwaukee Road trains 1 and 4, Pioneer Limited, from Minneapolis took place on the night of December 28 and from Milwaukee the morning of the 29th....The two dome cars used between Chicago-Milwaukee and Chicago-Madison have been sold (presumably to CNR) and made their last trips approximately December 20. Tap-lounge cars have been used since.

January 1970—55 Years Ago

The first major historical publication by the Chapter, "Hiawatha's Teakettles," an all-time steam roster of the Milwaukee Road was completed with 10 pages in the January 1970 S&C. The entire listing ran to 66 pages. Jim Harper did the major portion of the work on the project....The last RPO still running in the area is on MILW trains 56 and 57, the Fast Mail between Chicago and Minneapolis. The remainder of the consist is up to 20 cars of storage mail....Two MILW 4-unit electrics have been brought out of storage to handle increased traffic on the Coast Division. Wisconsin Chapter membership stood at 71, an all-time high, up from 38 members listed in the February 1963 roster.

January 1975—50 Years Ago

The feature article by "Pete" Rodgers explored the rail-water connections in the Milwaukee area. Also, librarian Carl Solheim discussed some tools for research in old railfan periodicals....RailBox cars were put into service in late November and editor Bob Adams spotted one at Butler on December 24. The steam-powered 24-car Freedom Train will begin its travels through all 48 contiguous states carrying ten cars of historical displays.

January 1980 - 45 Years Ago

Editor Tom Hoffmann reports on a winter-time trip from New York to Chicago on the Amtrak Lake Shore Limited. Aside from some operating problems caused by heavy snow, the trip was enjoyable and the service was good....The November 1979 issue of Amtrak News was reprinted in S&C and included a photo and story about Gil Reid and the Amtrak calendars....As of October 28, Turboliners were authorized for speeds in excess of 100 mph and conventional equipment was authorized for speeds up to 100 mph between Albany and Amsterdam, New York, after recent track improvements

January 1985 - 40 Years Ago

The feature story in S&C concerned the history of the former Presidential private car Ferdinand Magellan. Among many interesting details, the history notes that the heavily armor-plated car weighed in at 142.5 tons contrasted to its pre-conversion weight of 80 tons

January 1990 —35 Years Ago

Both the Broadway Limited and the Capitol Limited will be rerouted west of Pittsburgh within a year, Amtrak announced. The Broadway will move from the former Pennsylvania line through Fort Wayne to the former B&O line via Youngstown and Akron. The Capitol will move from the same ex-Pennsy line to an all-Conrail route via Cleveland, Toledo, and South Bend....The opening of the steam-powered Grand Canyon Railway between Williams, Arizona, and the Grand Canyon was extensively covered, including an exclusive report from our man in Arizona, "Pete" Rodgers.

January 1995 —30 Years Ago

Citing a deficit of some \$200 million nationally, Amtrak threatened on December 14 to eliminate all Chicago-Milwaukee service on April 1, 1995....The removal of rail from the ex-FRV/CNW main north of Oshkosh has been completed. Also, rail and ties have been removed from the ex-MILW line east of US 41....A large variety of leased motive power has been observed recently on the CP.

January 2000—25 Years Ago

BNSF and CN announced on December 20 that they would combine to form a 50,000-mile mega-system to be called North American Railways....The governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Passenger Rail recommended on December 20 that the DOT should use \$50 million in existing bonding authority to support the project for 110 mph train service between Madison and Milwaukee. The plans also call for construction of a new Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport with dedicated shuttle service between the rail station and airport terminal

January 2005 — 20 Years Ago

At a meeting on December 22, business and political leaders agreed to form a united front to advocate for extending Metra's North line from Kenosha to Milwaukee. No agreement has yet been reached on financing the \$152 million project....CP filed to abandon five miles of the West Allis Line (Air Line) from MP 88.2 (near US 41) to MP 93.2 (near 123rd St. in Wauwatosa). The line was previously severed at US 41 during construction of Miller Park.

January 2010 — 15 Years Ago

In January 2010 the Wisconsin Chapter NRHS kicked off its 60th Anniversary year with a series of events in conjunction with the Butler Public Library. All chapters members are eligible for library cards also. On January 27th Jerry Hilton presented a 45 minute slide presentation "Wisconsin Rails from Milwaukee's Streetcars to its better known Railroads".

January 2015 — 10 Years Ago

It was announced the Jim Scribbins past Chapter President had passed away on November 27 2015. Jim was 86 years old. Jim was a prolific railroad author and photographer. Jim was described as the "encyclopedia of the Milwaukee Road. Jim wrote many books including "The Hiawatha Story" and the "The 400 Story" plus several others on the Milwaukee Road. Several chapter members visited Joliet IL to check out the trains at this historic depot and location. The group toured the new Rock Island district station and also UD Tower.

January 2020— 5 Years Ago

It was announced that chapter member Jim Yanke had passed away on November 25 2019 at the age of 77. Jim worked for 42 years as a brakeman and conductor with the Chicago and Northwestern and then Union Pacific. Jim was an excellent photographer and historian. Jim's passion was CNW passenger trains. Jim was also a member of the CNW Historical Society. Jim authored a book in 2009 "The Chicago and Northwestern's Air Line" Jim was also enjoyed being a part of the Tuesday Night Slide Group. Tom Hoffmann presented a "Looking Back 50 Years" program on January 3 2020. It included shots from the Abilene Texas area in 1969 right after Tom got his first SLR camera. Also included were some shots from Wisconsin, Illinois and Louisiana. NOTE—Tom will be presenting another 50 year look back in March 2025 for the 75th anniversary of the chapter.

The Big Picture



Santa heads east towards East Troy on the Christmas Parade Train December 7 2024 Aerial Photo by Keith Schmidt