

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 74 Years

Visit the Chapter Webpage www.nrhswis.org



The 2024 NRHS National convention featured some street running on the Middletown & Hummelstown in Middletown, Pennsylvania Photo by Mike Yuhas

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Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming chapter events

Friday November 1 2024 NRHS 2024 Events recap - Join us as Ward Wells and Mike Yugas present a variety of photos taken at two 2024 NRHS events. Plus Jim Feyerherm from the East Troy Railroad Museum will open with special presentation.

Friday December 6 2024 An Evening with Bob Gallegos

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 membership@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 Yugas membership@nrhswis.org (or via USPS at PO Box 070758 Milwaukee, WI 53207).

Wisconsin Chapter officers are: Keith Schmidt, President; Ward Wells, Vice-President; Tom Marcussen, Secretary; Tara Grudzielanek, Treasurer. Directors: Dan Grudzielanek, Mike Yugas, Andrew Roach, Ralph McClure 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 ©2024, Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., NRHS.

No Meeting Summary for October 2024 Historical Items for 75th Anniversary

There is no meeting summary for October since the meeting was replaced with the banquet on Saturday October 5th.

I want to thank everyone that helped put the banquet together this year. It's greatly appreciated. Neal and Cathy for making all of the arrangements with Pallas Restaurant. Things went great and the food was very good and plentiful. Cathy also made centerpieces for each table. They were nice and someone from each table got to take one home. Mike Yugas for arranging for our speaker Ryan Daleen from GATX who gave a presentation full of great information regarding the world of railcar and locomotive leasing. THANK YOU !! The presentation was well received and some great questions followed the presentation. Ryan also told us that earlier in the day he had been at the Illinois Railway Museum working in the Friso #1630 as a student fireman. He had a busy day.

We are coming up on our 75th Anniversary in 2025. In the year 2000 the Chapter printed a special issue of the Sparks and Cinders. It was 23 pages. It was full of information on the chapter's history and events. I would be looking for some help in putting together another special 75th anniversary issue. Please consider helping with this special issue. Even if you don't want to write articles or things like that you can help out.

PLEASE check your photos for photos or slides of Chapter excursions or charters. According to the 2000 issue the chapter did a number of excursions in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's. Also there were the Butler 400's. It would be great to feature some photos to that event. Plus if anyone would like share stories from any of those events please let me know and we can arrange for a recording.

I know there must be photos of these events are any event that the chapter did. Photos of the regular meetings would be really great.

From the President

continued from Page 2

Anything from the past 75 years would be great. Maybe a memory from a meeting or presentation. A memory of your first meeting.

If you slides or prints of excursions or chapter events let me know I can help get them digitized and back to you so that you keep your memory. It would be great to have a 75th Anniversary section on the chapter website.

If you want to see the 50th anniversary issue of Sparks and Cinders and get some ideas of what was in it the issue is on the chapter website at www.nrhwis.org. Click on "Newsletters" on the main page. The 50th anniversary issue is on the bottom of the list. Check it out.

So just a quick summary I am looking for some people to help with a special 75th anniversary issue of Sparks and Cinders. I am also asking everyone to check their slide and photo collections for any photos of chapter events or excursions. Lastly I would enjoy having members write down some memories of the chapter.

Please see Page 5 of Sparks and Cinders for a list of excursions and events that the chapter was involved with or sponsored. Check your photos or collections for anything that might be of interest. I'm looking forward to hopefully seeing some great items.

If you have anything you wish to share please let me know at president@nrhwis.org.

THANK YOU !! In advance for this project.



Chapter 75th Anniversary Apparel Pre Order Available

At the Chapter banquet the 75th anniversary apparel was on display. It was well received with several people pre ordering items. Below is a list of the items available with the price. This price is the pre tax amount. Tax will be based on the buyers address. Payment will made when the items are delivered. I would like to have the first round of orders in by the end of November so that people could have them for Christmas. All of the items feature the 75th anniversary logo seen above embroidered on the item.

Short Sleeve Polo Shirt \$42.00 Small to 4X
White 100% Cotton or Gray 50% Cotton/50% Polyester

Sweatshirt \$50.00 Small to 4X White or Gray
50% Cotton and 50% Polyester

Long Sleeve Dress Shirt \$50.00 Small to 4X Gray Only
55% Cotton and 45% Polyester

Baseball Cap Adjustable Size White or Gray \$28.00

To preorder any of these please email at president@nrhwis.org. I would like put in an order on Monday November 25 2024.

All of the items will be on display at the November 1st meeting at the church.

The seasons are changing. Freeze warnings and the furnaces being turned on for the first time in several months are happening. Then in a few days temperatures in the 70's and the windows are open again. It's fall in Wisconsin. Get out and enjoy the weather, trains and the fall colors.

We are beginning to get into the 75th anniversary season. At the banquet several weeks ago the 75th anniversary apparel was on display and available for preorder. The interest and amount of preorders was very encouraging. THANK YOU !! There is more information on what is available on this page. Please check it out

Consider helping with the Chapter table at Trainfest 2024 on November 23-24 at the Baird Center at 4th and Wisconsin. There was no Trainfest in 2023 so attendance should be good at this as people make up for missing a year.

Get out and enjoy Fall and those around you.

"Get Busy Livin".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KJ'.

CPKC Holiday Train will visit SE Wisconsin

CPKC US Holiday Train will be running again this December. The Holiday Train is celebrating 26 years of running and helping to raise money for local food pantries. This train decorated with thousands of LEDs draws large crowds where ever it stops. The purpose of the train also benefits the communities. The stops also feature a concert from the specially designed stage car. The concerts are a highlight of every stop. People attending the stops are encouraged to bring food items to donate. Those donations are given to local food pantries. Come out and see the train at one of these Wisconsin stops.

Saturday December 7 2024

6:45pm Arrival 7:00-7:30pm Event Sturtevant WI
Amtrak Depot 9900 E Exploration Ct
8:05pm Arrival 8:15-8:45 pm Event Caledonia WI
Railway Crossing 11402 County Road G

Sunday December 8 2024

4:00pm Arrival 4:15-4:45pm Event Wauwatosa WI
Railway Crossing Harwood Ave
5:30pm Arrival 5:45-6:15pm Event Hartland WI
Railway Crossing Cottonwood Ave
6:40pm Arrival 6:45-7:15pm Event Oconomowoc WI
Railway Crossing South Silver Lake
7:50pm Arrival 8:00-8:30pm Event Watertown WI
Brandt Quirk Park Parking Lot
9:05pm Arrival 9:15-9:45pm Event Columbus WI
Amtrak Depot 395 N Ludington St



Friday November 1 2024 NRHS Event Recap with Ward Wells and Mike Yugas

Join us as Ward Wells and Mike Yugas present a variety of photos taken at two 2024 NRHS events.

The first portion of the program looks at the spring conference, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Sunday was the day of meetings, and on Monday, convention delegates were treated to a tour of the IAIS diesel shop in South Amana, and an inspection trip to Silvis, Illinois, where the group toured the Railroading Heritage of Midwest America shop.

The second portion of the program focuses on the 2024 NRHS convention in central Pennsylvania in August, with trips to Strasburg, East Broad Top, Reading & Northern, and Middletown & Hummelstown

The evening will begin with a special presentation from Jim Feyerherm from East Troy Railroad. If you have ridden any of the chapter trips you know Jim. To say Thank You to East Troy for their cooperation with the chapter we will have some treats for those attending in person at the church. Make plans to join us for what will be a great evening.



Tour of the Iowa Interstate diesel shop at South Amana. Photo by Mike Yugas.



Strasburg's former Canadian National engine prepares for the first train of the day. Photo by Mike Yugas.

Trainfest 2024 is right around the corner !

Do you enjoy talking trains with people? If so, the Chapter is looking for you. The Wisconsin Chapter NRHS will be hosting a table at Trainfest 2024 Saturday November 23rd and Sunday November 24th at the Baird Center in downtown Milwaukee. The show's hours are 9am to 5pm both days. We would be grateful if you could help us staff the table at any time during the show. There are no specific shifts or minimum time required. More details will be available as we get closer to the show. If you are interested in helping out please contact Ward Wells at wwardw@hotmail.com.

Setup for Trainfest will be Friday November 22 2024 between 9am and 8pm. The group running Trainfest has suggested using www.spothero.com to reserve parking. You can reserve a parking spot for the day now. Cost for parking at the Baird Center is \$33 per day. A lot across the street is \$20. Lots 3 blocks away are \$5-\$6. There will be more information as the show gets closer.



Join Ward and other volunteers at Trainfest 2024. This photo is from the Madison Show in February 2024.



From Trainfest 2007 the Chapter table with lovely wood grain tablecloth. State of the art VHS player too.

Do You Know ?

By Dave Nelson

Steel began to replace wood in freight car construction around 1900. Steel underframes enabled freight cars to have a higher capacity, and, together with air brakes and modern couplers, trains could be longer and move at higher speeds. But this also meant that loose and shifting loads were starting to seriously damage boxcar ends made of wood, even those reinforced with steel bracing. Boxcar ends made entirely of steel began to be common by the time of World War I, even when the car sides were still wood. (Metal sides on boxcars became common by the late 1920s).

While boxcar ends could be and were made of flat slab steel, those flat ends needed to be thick to withstand the stresses put on them by shifting loads. Freight car designers realized that steel ends could be thinner and lighter, yet stronger, if they featured horizontal corrugations. Corrugated steel is stronger not just because there is more steel, but because corrugations resist being bent. One of the earliest steel boxcar ends used on many wood-sided cars (and some early steel-sided cars as well) were the "Murphy" ends. Murphy ends usually had about 15 tightly spaced corrugations, on two

or three separate steel panels riveted together. See photo of a C&NW wood-sided boxcar at a museum in Nebraska.

By the 1930s, the



"Dreadnaught" corrugated boxcar end became dominant.

Compared to Murphy ends, the corrugations on Dreadnaught ends are larger and fewer. Each corrugation is thick in the middle and tapers down towards the sides. In the original Dreadnaught end, between the corrugations at the sides are teardrop-shaped "darts," very short corrugations, widest exactly where the primary corrugations are most narrow. These "opposing" corrugations lessened a theoretical point of weakness between the corrugations. An old boxcar at the WSOR roundhouse in Janesville, painted blue, with various safety-first messages painted on it, has original Dreadnaught ends. See photo.



A novel attempt to avoid weak points in parallel horizontal corrugations was the odd-looking "Van Dorn" end: concentric circular corrugations with no horizontal or vertical weak points. It was expensive to manufacture, and the bull's eye pattern made bolting on ladders and grab irons a challenge. The photo is of a Pennsylvania Railroad boxcar.



Eventually the "Improved Dreadnaught" end thinned out the intermediate dart corrugations and spread them from side to side between the thicker corrugations,

which retained their tapered shape. See photo of an M&St.L boxcar.

A further evolution in the design of traditional boxcar ends was the Pullman-Standard "PS-1" end which had side to side corrugations like the Dreadnaught but evenly thick from side to side, with no taper and no smaller corrugations between them. Often there was just one small corrugation at the top. See photo.

Some "Modified Improved Dreadnaught" ends followed Pullman-Standard's lead, and also did away with the smaller corrugations. More modern



boxcars often have sides that extend beyond the boxcar ends,

covering the ends of the corrugations.

These corrugations by the way were (and are) not cast into the boxcar end but are stamped into it. The photo of an improved Dreadnaught



end on an old Milwaukee Road gondola with a segment cut out shows the idea.



Excursions sponsored by the Wisconsin Chapter NRHS

May 7, 1950 SpeedRail fan trip

May 25, 1952 Milwaukee-Green Bay [C&NW] Valley 400, visit C&NW, MILW, GB&W roundhouses.
Return [Milwaukee Road] Chippewa.

Oct. 10, 1953 Milwaukee-Madison [Milwaukee Road] Train 33; Madison-Elroy [C&NW] Dakota 400.
Return [C&NW] Dakota 400, Elroy-Madison; Madison-Milwaukee [Milwaukee Road]
Train 14.

May 24, 1953 Streetcar trip [Transport Co.] Route 15 and portion of Routes 10 and 16 (scheduled for
conversion to trolley buses)

May 23, 1954 Milwaukee-Janesville-Madison-Milwaukee [Milwaukee Road] (following original
Milwaukee & Mississippi route 100 years later) (steam-powered; MILW 171)

Oct. 27, 1956 Night streetcar trip [Transport Co.] Routes 10 and 11 (Route 11 converted to buses
on Oct. 28)

Oct. 12, 1958 Milwaukee-Fox Lake [Milwaukee Road] (diesel-powered; MILW GP-9 2433)

Oct. 11, 1959 Milwaukee-Evanston-Mundelein [North Shore Line]

May 27, 1960 Milwaukee-Wisconsin Dells [Milwaukee Road]

Oct. 16, 1960 Milwaukee-Baraboo [C&NW]

Oct., 1963 Milwaukee-Green Bay [C&NW] via regularly scheduled trains

Sept. 19, 1964 Milwaukee-Portage [Milwaukee Road]

Nov. 14, 1971 Chicago-Joliet [Amtrak via Milwaukee Road-GM&O] (first service through Chicago)

May 8, 1976 Hosted Regional meeting of State Historical Society

Nov. 7, 8, 9, 1980 MidRail '80 (also NRHS Board of Directors meeting)

June 4, 5, 1983 Butler Railroad/Frontier Days (Butler 400) [C&NW] (steam-powered; C&NW 1385)

June 23, 24, 1984 Butler Railroad Days (Butler 400) [C&NW] (steam-powered; C&NW 1385)

July 28, 1985 Butler Railroad Day (Butler 400) [C&NW] (steam-powered; C&NW 1385)

Oct. 28, 1989 Elkhorn-Janesville-Monroe [WICT]

Sept. 25, 1999 N. Milwaukee-Horicon-Oshkosh [WSOR]

Another Successful Banquet

by Mike Yuhas

On Saturday, October 5, three dozen chapter members descended upon Pallas in West Allis for the annual Wisconsin Chapter banquet. After a buffet-style dinner and dessert, president Keith Schmidt made a few announcements and previewed embroidered chapter 75th anniversary clothing items.

The main event was a lively and informative presentation by Ryan Daleen, a portfolio manager at GATX. His talk covered the history of GATX, and delved into today's fleet of numerous car types. A Q&A session followed.

Thanks to our speaker, attendees, and especially Neal & Cathy Wegner for making the arrangements with Pallas.



From the Archives

November 1954—70 Years Ago

Tragedy strikes the WCF&N — The last two interurban parlor cars in regular service in the United States were destroyed when a \$500,000 fire gutted the roundhouse of the Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern on Sunday, October 31. Also consumed in the flames were the electric freight locos and one of the ex- Knoxville streetcars. This leaves but one interurban, No. 100, to operate on the daily runs to Cedar Falls and to Waverly and one streetcar for the daily except Sunday service to Cedar Falls. While one streetcar and one interurban are all that is needed for the actual operation of the lines, the future of the passenger service will depend on the ability of the company to keep the two units in running order....The Transport Company has repainted streetcar No. 943 white with green trim and lettered it for a safety campaign. This car had been red, white and blue (for Navy recruiting) since 1951.

November 1959 - 65 Years Ago

(Attached to Vol. 9, No. 11 of S&C was Vol. 2, No. 8, of "Wisconsin Railroads," published by the late Don Dietrich. The following is excerpted from that publication.) Short Line Notes: A quick tour of the state's northern short lines during the past month has provided this information on motive power: Laona & Northern: No. 4 2-6-2 (stored), ex Fairchild & Northeastern No. 101, Vulcan diesel No. 4337. Marinette, Tomahawk & Western: No. 19 2-6-0 (stored), No. 408 EMD diesel; No. 651 ex-EJ&E No. 408, No. 538 EMD diesel ex-M&StL No. D538. There is a live steamer in Wisconsin. Menominee Sugar Co. at Green Bay is operating an 0-4-0T during the sugar beet harvest season....The Soo Line is installing CTC on 58 miles of main line between Waukesha and North Fond du Lac. The North Fond du Lac-Stevens Point line will not be under CTC. The entire Waukesha-Stevens Point line will be controlled by the Stevens Point dispatcher. The CTC installation will cost \$375,000

November 1964 - 60 Years Ago

The Milwaukee Road's new Thunderhawk freight service (train 262) will get a bit of merchandising pizzazz. Distinctive signs with the name of the train will be placed on the lead unit.

November 1969 - 55 Years Ago

The Wisconsin Chapter was preparing for the Annual Railroadiana Auction scheduled for Friday, November 7....News items: MILW train 75 derailed at Caledonia on October 17 and was sideswiped by train 262 causing the line to be blocked for two days....The ICC has scheduled hearings at Milwaukee City Hall on the Milwaukee Road's petition to discontinue the Afternoon Hiawathas.

November 1974—50 Years Ago

The Annual Chapter Auction is scheduled for Friday, November 8....A C&NW press release reports on the placing of an order for a \$500,000 Austrian Ballast Undercutter/Cleaner, the first of its kind in the U.S....The Milwaukee Journal reports that "Old Smokey" is headed for the Illinois Railway Museum at Union, Illinois....A TV special on railroading featuring singer Johnny Cash is scheduled to air on ABC-TV on November 22.

November 1979—45 Years Ago

The first Superliner consist went west on train 7, the Empire Builder, on October 28....There are news reports of a possible embargo of approximately half of the 9500-mile Milwaukee Road on November 1 as the bankruptcy judge has determined that the railroad will be cashless on that date.

November 1984 - 40 Years Ago

Russ Porter reports that a fund drive has been started to construct a replacement for the Wisconsin Dells depot which was demolished by a coal train derailment in 1983....The Alaska Railroad transfer from the Federal government to the State of Alaska is scheduled for January 1985....The imminent demise of the car ferry Chief Wawatam was noted as the Soo Line embargoed its St. Ignace interchange on August 23, 1984, "account dock facility collapsed."

November 1989 - 35 Years Ago

Soo Line GP38 No. 4403, repainted in the new solid red paint scheme, was spotted at East Minneapolis on the C&NW....The Blackbeards are back – former MILW SD40-2s (6300 series), with GAJX reporting marks, are in service on the Soo Line, they are leased on a daily basis. The recent purchase by the Soo Line of SD60s has made motive power on most through freights quite predictable....According to a report in the Wall Street Journal, Canadian Pacific, Ltd., is proposing to purchase 44% of the stock in the Soo Line that it does not already own for \$19.50 per share, or about \$81.9 million. The CP had put its 56% stake in the Soo up for sale last year but couldn't find any buyers. They now feel that acquiring the balance of the Soo is the best way to "rationalize operations."

November 1994 - 30 Years Ago

The new Chapter publication "Wisconsin Rails II" will be for sale at Trainfest on November 12 and 13....N&W 611 was involved in a yard mishap on September 27 which resulted in \$43,000 damages to the steam engine....The WC has begun dismantling the ex-FRV/CNW main between Tower CF (Oshkosh) and Dixie (Neenah)....The original Burlington Zephyr, now on display at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, will be trucked to the Northern Railcar shops in Milwaukee for a cosmetic restoration.

November 1999 - 25 Years Ago

The Chapter excursion to Oshkosh on September 25 via the WSOR was an outstanding success. 118 people rode the train on a beautiful, sunny Saturday....WC reopened a portion of the West Bend sub (ex-CNW Valley Sub) between Eden and West Bend on September 28 to relieve congestion on the main line account a tie re-placement program between Slinger and Burlington....UP ordered 1000 SD70M locomotives from EMD for \$2 billion. They will be built at the GM plant in London, Ontario, and delivered over the next four years....The Metra Board awarded a contract for 26 new locomotives at \$2 million each.

November 2004— 20 Years Ago

The CP C&M Sub was blocked when two 80-foot high voltage transmission towers collapsed and fell over the tracks about eight miles south of Milwaukee on October 9. Sabotage is suspected as it was discovered that bolts had been removed from the base of the towers. Freight and passenger service was suspended until the evening of October 10 while crews cleared the right-of-way and authorities gathered evidence....Cameras whose main mission is to record the railroad's experience in grade crossing collisions and near misses are coming to UP locomotives as they have to BNSF and NS....UP announced it has ordered 315 locomotives meeting Tier 2 EPA emissions standards. The units will be EMD SD70ACe and GE GEVO models....BNSF announced that its West Burlington Shops will close on December 31

November 2009 — 15 Years Ago

The Mid-Continent Railway Museum is considering opening a second museum facility in Mazomanie, the Baraboo News Republic reported on October 9. Mazomanie is about 20 miles south of the museum's home in North Freedom on a former Milwaukee Road branch line now operated by the Wisconsin & Southern. The new museum would focus on the Milwaukee Road.

Don Meyer, manager of the museum said.

November 2014 — 10 Years Ago

Wisconsin & Southern has reopened an 11-mile line between Madison, Fitchburg, and Oregon, this week. The line serves a new Lycon sand plant in Oregon. The company purchased 60 hopper cars to carry construction grade sand for concrete from Janesville, Wis., to the new plant. The railroad expects to offer service three days a week. Lycon is a ready-mix concrete and building materials company serving the region. The occasion was marked in grand style on Monday with speeches, a ribbon cutting, and a 22-car revenue train – the first on the line since 1996. The ceremony took place where the railroad crosses Clayton Road in the city of Fitchburg before a crowd of about 200 onlookers. The line former Chicago & North Western route.

November 2019— 5 Years Ago

The Hop Milwaukee's street cars 1st year of operation was celebrated at the November chapter meeting. Milwaukee Alderman Robert Baumann and HOP general manager Terry Mulcahy presented an update on the streetcar. The HOP equipment consists of 5 Brookville Liberty streetcars manufactured in Pennsylvania. The cars are 67' long and 8'8" wide with a capacity of 150 passengers seated and standing in the 3 car set. Ridership has been exceeding predictions.

The Big Picture



The NRHS chartered RDC trip on the Reading & Northern performing a runby. Photo by Mike Yuhas.