



NRHS



WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Volume 75 Number 2

EST **I** 1950

February 2025

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



Is this track Abandoned? Many would say so...but not necessarily. It might be Discontinued. Or Embargoed. How do you tell? Fox Valley & Lake Superior out-of-service track at Manawa, Wisc. Photo by Brian Buchanan

In This Issue

- ◆ *From the President*
- ◆ *Annual Meeting*
- ◆ *Do You Know*

Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming chapter events

February 7 2025 Chapter Annual Meeting and Brian Buchanan Abandonments or Not

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: Keith Schmidt President Ward Wells Vice President, 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 ©2025, Wisconsin Chapter, Inc., NRHS.

Meeting Summary for January 3 2025

President Keith Schmidt ran this meeting from our in-person meeting site in the basement of the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point. Recording started at 7:29 pm. There were then 38 devices in the Zoom virtual meeting room. Keith started the meeting at 7:32 pm. He welcomed all attendees to the first meeting of 2025, which is our 75th anniversary year.

Announcements

Cookies, hot chocolate, and lemonade are available in the back of the room, for in-person attendees to enjoy. Some 75th anniversary apparel is there for sale. There is still time to order for the next delivery.

Keith counted 20 people in the physical meeting room. There were then 41 devices in the Zoom meeting room. We are looking for volunteer help to make our 75th anniversary events happen. No date has been picked yet for the bus trip to the Railroading Heritage of Midwest America (RRHMA) steam restoration shop in Silvis, Illinois, just east of Rock Island in the Quad Cities area. We will probably have a "Wisconsin Day" event at the East Troy Electric Railroad Museum. No date has been proposed yet. Our 75th anniversary banquet is set for Saturday, October 4, at the Polish Center of Wisconsin, at 6941 South 68th Street (north of Rawson) in Franklin.

Our next meeting, on Friday, February 7, will be our annual formal business meeting. It will include the annual election of officers and directors. Every position is up for re-election every year. We will have at least one vacancy on the Chapter Board. Andrew Roach has asked to step down. Keith thanked him for his many years of service as a Director. Any members who are interested in serving in any office, or as a Director, should e-mail Keith Schmidt at president@nrhswis.org. Nominations can also be made from the floor at the meeting.

The February 7 business meeting will also include / feature the annual treasurer's report, membership report, and an update on 75th anniversary events. Brian Buchanan will offer a presentation on abandonments and other ways to take track out of service. Keith reminded all that only members of NRHS National are full

From the President

=continued from Page 2

chapter members. Both National and Chapter membership are required to participate in discussions at the formal annual business meeting, vote in the election, or hold an office or directorship. Subscribers to *Sparks & Cinders*, guests and friends are asked to observe the proceedings.

There are three options to join or renew Chapter membership. The first way is very easy. Our treasurer Tara Grudzielanek is here tonight. Go to the 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. Members and subscribers will receive 10 issues of our monthly newsletter *Sparks & Cinders*, plus admission to members-only events, and member discounts on other events and merchandise. 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.

We will have a Chapter Board meeting on Tuesday, January 7, probably at or around 6:30 pm. The exact time has not yet been determined. The main topic will be preparations for the annual formal business meeting on Friday, February 7.

We will be having a Chapter table at the annual Mad City Train Show, at the Alliant Energy Center south of downtown Madison, Wisconsin, the weekend of February 15-16. It is not possible to predict now what the weather will be like. Keith said he has seen everything from 55F to -20F. Members who are interested in helping should send an e-mail to Ward Wells at wwardw@hotmail.com.

Presentation

Keith Schmidt introduced our presenter Doug Scott at 7:42 pm. Doug is a long-term member of the Cape Cod Chapter of the NRHS. They lease and maintain the former New Haven station in West Barnstable, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. There are a number of interesting freight (Massachusetts Coastal), passenger (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority / MBTA, Cape Cod Central) and maritime operations on and around Cape Cod, including the large vertical lift bridge over the Cape Cod Canal at Bourne. He offered some other pictures of railroading in central Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and some SE US states. Most images were from the pre-pandemic year of 2019 and the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021. There was a question and answer session at the end of the presentation. That session ended at 8:44 pm.

There were 20 in-person attendees in the church basement. Your secretary saw a peak of 43 devices connected to Zoom during the meeting. Subtracting the two devices in the church basement tonight yielded a total attendance of 61. The recording stopped at 8:45 pm. Mike Yuhos hosted an informal on-line discussion group following the meeting. The discussion group ended, and the Zoom meeting room closed, at about 9:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Thomas W. Marcussen
Wisconsin Chapter Secretary

As I am preparing this it is -1 degrees and dropping. Yes it's winter in Wisconsin in January. It's also time for the chapter's annual business meeting and elections. The annual meeting and elections will be held at the Friday February 7th meeting.

This year it's a bit different since there will be an opening on the board of directors. Andrew Roach has decided to step down after 8 years of service. Thank You to Andrew for his service on the board. Please consider submitting your name to be on the board of directors. It's a chance to get more involved in the decision-making process. The Chapter is 75 years old but still going strong.

Plans for the 75th anniversary are ongoing. We can use help with some of the events that are being worked on. The chapter is hoping to host a Wisconsin NRHS Chapter Day at the East Troy Railroad Museum. That will probably be in July. Help will be needed with that. Still working on the bus trip to Silvis to check out the steam locomotive restoration. We also have 75th anniversary apparel and hats available. We hope to setup an online store soon to make ordering easier. Don't let winter get you down and like Jim Wrinn always said "Get Busy Livin"

Madison Train Show 2025 - Volunteers Needed

The Mad City Model Railroad Show is right around the corner!

Do you enjoy talking trains with people? If so, the Chapter is looking for you. The Chapter will be hosting a table at the Mad City Model Railroad Show the weekend of February 15-16 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. The show's hours are from 9am to 5pm Saturday and 9am to 4pm on Sunday. We need volunteers to help us staff the table during the show. There are no specific shifts or minimum time required - you're welcome at any time. If you are interested in helping out please contact Ward Wells at wwardw@hotmail.com.



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.

Abandoned ? Embargoed ? Let's Find Out Friday February 7 2025

Is this track Abandoned? Many would say so...but not necessarily. It might be Discontinued. Or Embargoed. How do you tell? What's the difference? Does it matter? How does a railroad decide which status to put it in? How do you do it? Does a spur track have to go thru the process? Brian Buchanan will present an informative and entertaining program clarifying what each is and what it means... and where it leads us. Let's go down the rabbit hole. You'll be surprised where it takes us.

Brian worked 41 years for Chicago & North Western, Wisconsin Central, Canadian National and Fox Valley & Lake Superior. He was involved in line studies while at CN, which included starting the embargo/discontinuance/abandonment process on lines. Now in retirement, Mr. Buchanan frequently posts railroad videos on YouTube under the handle KillerBee.

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

Chapter Board Meeting Highlights and New Committee Opportunities

The Wisconsin Chapter NRHS had a board meeting on January 7 2025. There was some good discussion regarding a couple of issues. First one is getting some new blood into helping run the organization. Finding volunteers to help can sometimes be difficult. The chapter has decided to take a more direct approach and start reaching out to folks to see if they are interested. Sometimes it's harder to say no when someone is asking you directly. We would like to form a nominating committee to sit down and discuss ways to recruit some new folks to help out. If you are interested in being a member of that committee let me know at president@nrhswis.org or Mike Yugas at membership@nrhswis.org.

The second issue is the chapter awarding grants to organizations that have ongoing railroad or railroad related projects that need some financial assistance. We would like to organize a grant committee that would setup a grant application and rules for grants. Once that is done then the group would move on to the responsibility of issuing grants. If you are interested in this committee please contact Mike Yugas at membership@nrhswis.org

The board did decide to sponsor a student for the NRHS Railcamp in 2025. Railcamp is for students between 14 and 18 years of age. The student would have to apply and be accepted into the program. Space is limited. If you know some who might be interested check out the website at <https://nrhs.com/programs/railcamp/>. Also contact Mike Yugas at membership@nrhswis.org. By Keith Schmidt

75th Anniversary Update

At the board meeting in January there was some updates given about the 75th Anniversary of the chapter. Things are starting to come together.

I just wanted to say THANK YOU !! To everyone that order the 75th Anniversary apparel. The first sale went very well. I also have to say a big THANK YOU !! To Dan and Tara Grudzielanek who have help out with this a lot. If you placed an order at the banquet or at some other before the 1st of the year likely your items are available. If you haven't pick them up or would like them shipped to you at a cost \$8.95 let me know at president@nrhswis.org or please pick up your items at a chapter meeting. A second order has been placed so there will some items available for sale even if you didn't place an order.

Also talked about was a "Wisconsin Chapter Day at East Troy Trolley". This day would include featuring Wisconsin street cars and rolling stock in the museum's collection. Regular fares would apply. We did talk about a possible coupon for reduced fare for members that would be included in Sparks and Cinders. Also talked about was an "extra fare" item which would include photos staged using the new North Shore merchandise car. We are hoping to get some vehicles and actors to help out. We are looking for an 1930-1940's vintage flat bed truck. Any thoughts please let me know. This would be held in the afternoon of that day.

We are still working on a date for a trip to Silvis IL to check out the restoration of steam locomotives at the RRHMA facility down there. Watch for more details

Last item is the possibility of steaming up the #1003 Soo Line 2-8-2 and running it as part of the celebration. This would be a free event. Some contacts have been made and plans are very preliminary. More information would be coming out as things being to come together. By Keith Schmidt

Chapter Annual Business Meeting and Elections

The February 7th chapter meeting will begin with the annual business meeting and elections. All of the positions on the board are up for election each year. If you want to run for any position please let me know at president@nrhswis.org or have someone nominate you at the meeting. To hold an office within the chapter you must a member in good standing in both the Wisconsin Chapter and National NRHS organization.

To be able to vote during the annual meeting you must be a member of both the chapter and the national NRHS organization. Otherwise just please watch and wait until the meeting is over. Below is the agenda for the meeting.

Annual Meeting Friday February 7 2025

Call the meeting to order
Establish a forum - 5% of members in good standing of both chapter and national
Introduction of Board Members
Approval of Feb 2024 meeting minutes
Treasurers Report
Membership Report
Elections

- All offices are up for elections. Nominations taken from the floor
- One open position on the board of directors.

New Business

75th Anniversary Update
Chapter Train Show Update
Two new committees - Nominating and Grants
Looking for volunteers

Open Forum

Anything else for the good of the chapter
Adjourn

Some Interesting Eastbound Trains in Milwaukee January 2025



CPKC #8128 features the new paint scheme for the railroad. The AC44CWM was leading the eastbound intermodal train #148 west of the depot. Taken from Mt Vernon Ave. Photo by Keith Schmidt



Wait a minute. Eastbound Amtrak #8 with the sun on it's nose. Somethings not right. Saturday January 18 2025. #8 was running about 19 hours late at 10am when it arrived in MKE. The passengers got an extra night on the train. Photo by Keith Schmidt

Do You Know ?

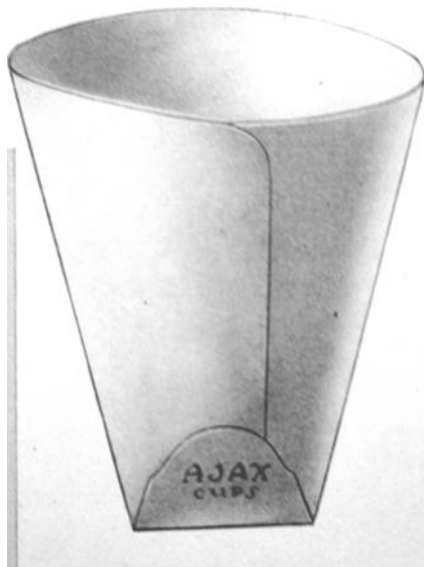
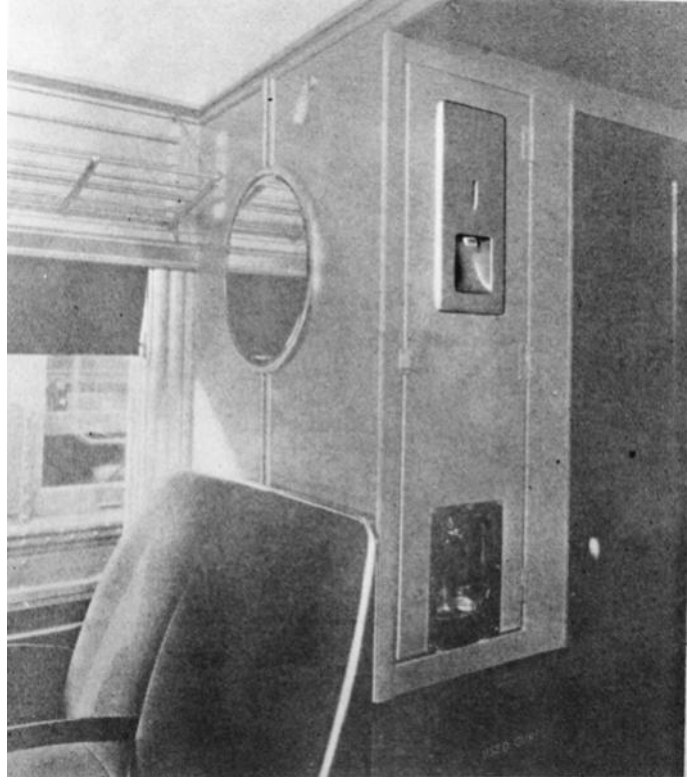
by Dave Nelson

One creature comfort that the traveling public came to expect early on was drinking water on passenger coaches. For some time, this was simply a pail or barrel of water and a communal dipper or perhaps a tin cup secured with a chain -- about what you'd find at a school, hospital, hotel, or other public building. Sure, shared-use drinking utensils lacked basic hygiene but then so did the water itself, untreated until well into the twentieth century. The year 1908 saw three coincidental but important developments: chlorine was used for the first time to disinfect drinking water, biology professor Alvin Dawson published an influential article titled "Death in School Drinking Cups," and cheap, clean, single-use paper Dixie cups were invented. The Lackawanna Railroad switched to paper cups on its passenger trains almost immediately, and local bans on shared-use dippers and cups soon became common. Paper cups became the rule on the better passenger trains by around 1920. By the streamlined passenger train era, railroads were offering chilled water dispensers to their passengers, but the railroads were getting tired of the water damage done to upholstery, windowsills, and carpets, and of the discarded paper cups on the floors and seats of their trains.



their inherently disposable nature. Eventually Lily and Dixie offered paper cups with a somewhat similar design to the Ajax: a cone shape with no flat bottom. Online photos of paper cup collections show that airports, bus stations, and gas stations also adopted the Ajax-type cup.

Sources for this article include the 1937 Car Builder's Cyclopedia (Simmons-Boardman).



To the rescue came the Logan Drinking Cup division of U.S. Envelope Co., and its "Ajax" brand paper drinking cups, with special dispensing cabinets which would be placed near the water source (fastened to a wall or styled to be seamlessly embedded in the wall). The Ajax cup's tapered cone design meant it could not be set down -- it had to be held in the hand. The result: passengers sipped their water near the

dispenser, disposed of their cup, and returned to their seat. The cups could be shipped and dispensed nearly flat, so the dispensing cabinet took up little space. And railroads could order Ajax cups with their own logos or slogans printed on them -- these are now highly collectible items because of



From the Archives

February 1955—70 Years Ago

The Milwaukee Road has received per-mission to discontinue trains 14 and 33 between Milwaukee and Madison. This leaves the Milwaukee Road with two runs to Madison and one return. The C&NW has one train each way....C&NW's Third Ward roundhouse has been clam shelled to death. The once-active depot round-house is now just a pile of rubble....Joe Driscoll informs us that the Soo Line ran a train of 15 to 20 scrap-bound steamers through Waukesha, Thursday, January 20. The funeral train was pulled by two Geeps and was bound for Chicago

February 1960 - 65 Years Ago

GB&W is experimenting with a new type of compartmentalized reefer which was built by Western Refrigerator Lines Co., of

Green Bay. It features a ball-bearing mounted steel gate which, though it weighs 1,800 pounds, can easily be moved by one man....The Milwaukee Road and Chrysler Corp. are running a real piggy-back service - auto carrying trailers on flat cars. Approximately five days are saved on the 1,879-mile run from Chicago to Spokane

February 1965 - 60 Years Ago

The Laker is gone - and we of WC-NRHS were on hand for the inevitable end. Several members and friends plus Frank

Aukoffer of the Milwaukee Journal made the trip on No. 3. The following morning, Ferge, Sheperd, and Driscoll made the last trip on No. 4....From the March, 1902, issue of The Railroad and Marine Gazette: "8 Fast Trains Daily - The North Western Line - CStPM&O Ry. It costs no more to ride on these trains than on trains of inferior roads. The train of fame is the North Western Limited. It is the most comfortable train in every respect between Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Chicago. It has unexcelled dining car service, luxurious sleeping car accommodations, free reclining chair cars, and is lighted throughout by electricity and gas. A trans-continental traveler says: 'I have tried them all and I prefer the North Western Limited, the best to be found from coast to coast.'"

February 1970—55 Years Ago

Member Bob Manross contributed a history of the Fennimore "Dinky Line." The 3-foot narrow gauge line ran from Fennimore to Woodman....Editor Bob Adams covered the last run of the Afternoon Hiawatha on January 23, 1970, which, he noted, came one day after the first commercial flight of a Boeing 747.

February 1975—50 Years Ago

The first of a two-part history of Milwaukee Road steam, reprinted from the Milwaukee Road Magazine, was published....Jerry Hilton reported that excellent progress was being made on the restoration of SP 4449, slated to be under steam within a month.

February 1980 - 45 Years Ago

The Chapter Board of Directors recommended that dues be increased by \$2.00 per year to help pay for increased production costs for S&C....Apparently the Rock Island will be liquidated after the Federal money for directed service runs out in March....The UP announced a merger agreement with MoPac on January 8.

February 1985 - 40 Years Ago

A two-page article reprinted from the C&NW News detailed the exploits of steam engine 1385 during the summer of 1984....Jerry Hilton reported that if the acquisition of the Milwaukee Road core system is accomplished by C&NW, it will not include the Milwaukee depot or most of the buildings and land west of the 35th St. viaduct

February 1990 —35 Years Ago

The railfan community mourned the passing of David P. Morgan, long-time editor of Trains magazine, on January 10....VIA passenger service in Canada was cut by over 50% as many passenger trains ceased operations on January 15...."On Track," a new TV series produced by Channel 10 and hosted by Chuck Zehner premiered of February 3. (The title was changed to "Tracks Ahead" when it was distributed nationally by PBS— ed.)

February 1995 —30 Years Ago

Ex-Pennsylvania Railroad GG-1 No. 4890 passed through Waukesha on its way to the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay on January 22....The City of Oshkosh announced that residents with property along the former Milwaukee Road branch through Oshkosh will be able to enlarge their yards. WisDOT has completed removal of ties and rails and property owners will have an option to purchase adjoining right-of-way.... WC has acquired three SD45s and FP45 No. 91 (in warbonnet colors) from the Santa Fe.

February 2000—25 Years Ago

The former Ann Arbor Railroad, ex-Grand Trunk Western, carferry City of Milwaukee was towed from its long-time mooring point at Elberta, Michigan, to its new home at Manistee, Michigan, on January 14....UP Challenger 4-6-6-4 No. 3985, now undergoing flue replacement and running gear work in Cheyenne, may power a few trips later this year....WC is filing to abandon 26 miles of line between Crandon and White Lake....Illinois Railway Museum announced that ex-Frisco No. 1630, a 2-10-0, would operate on five weekends this summer.

February 2005 — 20 Years Ago

The new Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport opened on January 18 with ceremonies attended by government, Amtrak, and airline officials. All Hiawatha service trains stop at the station which features a free shuttle to and from the airport terminal building....The \$5.4 million renovation of the downtown Milwaukee Amtrak station, already a year behind schedule, faces additional delays with zoning and permit problems....The State of Wisconsin purchased the abandoned 37-mile "Plymouth Line" between Kiel and Saukville from Canadian National on January 13. The line will be operated by WSOR. CN granted trackage rights to WSOR from the north end of Milwaukee to Saukville to access the line.

February 2010 — 15 Years Ago

Amtrak has launched a humor-based ad campaign at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, hinting to air travelers that there's a better option, the Chicago Tribune has reported. The passenger railroad is advertising in the gray bins in which air passengers place carry-on items for security screening. "Wear mismatched socks - we'll never know," exhorts one ad. "Upgrade to coach," urges another. "Our goal here is to get a smile from passengers and also get them to think twice about going through the frustration of flying, or driving."

February 2015 — 10 Years Ago

The ongoing project to restore Mid-Continent Railway Museum's Chicago & North Western 4-6-0 No. 1385 to service reached another milestone this month when the engine's frame was repainted. Over the last year the engine frame and other parts were cleaned, scraped, welded, and new parts were milled. Last month wheel work for No. 1385 was completed at the Strasburg Rail Road shop in Strasburg, Pa. The work included new tires, crank pins, and truing/turning the tire seats... During the month of December the Canadian Pacific changed the radio channel used for voice communications on a portion of the C&M Sub. Frequency 161.085 (AAR 65) is now used between Milwaukee and Rondout. Between Rondout and Chicago, and on the Fox Lake Sub., 160.770 (AAR 44) is still used. This change appears to be in connection with some modified dispatcher territories at certain times of the day and week

February 2020— 5 Years Ago

On September 17 2019 the North Shore Electroliner was placed back on its original trucks. The Electroliner that is owned by the Illinois Railway Museum is likely one of the most famous and recognizable pieces of equipment the museum has in its collection. The process of putting the new trucks under the Electroliner took at 8 hours. The Electroliners restoration is continuing at the museum. It has been out and running a few times.

The Big Picture



CPKC #8128 shows off the new CPKC paint job on Saturday January 4 2025. #8128 is leading the eastbound CPKC Train #148. The location is a familiar one to many in Milwaukee. When it was the Milwaukee Road it was Powerton. Now it's grade crossing for Waterford Ave. Photo by Dan Grudzielanek