

NRHS

WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Volume 76 Number 1

EST  1950

January 2026

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 76 Years

Visit the Chapter Webpage www.nrhwis.org



"Caritas" in a Fall Color Special being pulled by SP #4449 at Hastings MN in October 2009. Photo by Keith Schmidt

In This Issue

- ◆ *From the President*
- ◆ *Do You Know*
- ◆ *In Memoriam Bob Joyce*

Wisconsin Chapter Meeting Schedule

Upcoming chapter events

Friday January 2 2026 Nona Hill and Clark Johnson present "850,000 Miles by Private Rail Car"

Friday February 6 2026 Chapter Annual Meeting and Elections

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.

Meeting Summary

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 to 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, Ralph McClure and Neal Wegner. One Vacancy

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.

President Keith Schmidt ran this meeting from the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point. The meeting started at 7:32 pm. Flood damage (from the August 9-10 rainstorm) repairs to the basement are now complete. We decided to meet in the first-floor "Friendship Lounge," near the front entrance door. A wedding party had left the church a short time ago. There was a Christmas tree in the room. Snow was falling outside of the windows. There was about a foot of snow on the ground outside. A great winter scene

Tonight was the last regular meeting, and the last Chapter event, of our 75th anniversary year. We had a number of special events, and some special branded merchandise. It was a very good year. The upcoming year of 2026 will be the 250th birthday / anniversary of the United States. We are considering some options for what we could do with that. Chicago & North Western 4-6-0 #1385, at the Mid-Continent Railroad Museum in North Freedom, was steamed up enough to blow the whistle, for the first time after many years of rebuilding, earlier this fall. They expect to have it in full steam operation, pulling trains, in 2026.

Keith reminded all of us that those who wish to stay involved have to renew their membership for 2026. Dues are due now. The amount is still \$20.00. There are three options to renew (or join) Chapter membership. The first way is to pay by cash or check in person. Our Chapter Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek is here 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 see value in what we are doing here, please renew now,

or 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.

Our next regular membership meeting will be held on Friday, January 2, 2026. Nona Hill and Clark Johnson will present "850,000 Miles by Private Rail Car (Caritas)." Our annual business meeting will be on Friday, February 6. We have one vacancy on the Chapter Board. Keith Schmidt said he is willing to serve another year as Chapter President in 2026. He would like to have someone else take over for 2027. These are two opportunities for members to consider.

Keith reported on the loss of two Chapter members. Gary Children was our Chapter President in 1995-1996 and a long-time Board member. He was also very active at the East Troy Electric Railroad Museum. A summary of Gary's contributions appears on Page 3 of the November 2025 issue of Sparks & Cinders.

We just recently lost Bob Joyce. Bob was our Chapter President in 1972-1973, the editor of Sparks & Cinders from 1989 to 2012, and our National Director for many years. Bob had been in a hospice for some time. Funeral services for Bob will be held at Schmidt & Bartelt Funeral Home in Wauwatosa on Sunday, December 7. Bob's wife Joan offered to donate his collection of railroad timetables, books, slides, to the Chapter. We tentatively plan to offer them at an auction open to Chapter members, with the proceeds going to fund railroad preservation grants.

A moment of silence was offered in memory of both Gary Children and Bob Joyce.

Two Christmas holiday trains are coming to our area. The East Troy Electric Railroad will operate theirs tomorrow—Saturday, December 6. They will leave the Elegant Farmer site SW of Mukwonago about 5:00 pm, with several intermediate stops, and arrive in East Troy about 6:30 pm. The Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train will be in our area, coming in from the south on Tuesday, December 9, and leaving to the NW on Wednesday, December 10. CPKC operates on the former Milwaukee Road main line.

Presentation

Keith Schmidt introduced our presenter Keith Kohlmann at 7:43 pm. There was a computer / audio outage for Zoom room attendees, to transfer Zoom from our Windows computer to Keith Kohlmann's Apple computer. There were then about 25 in-person attendees at the church site, and 38 virtual attendees in Zoom.

Keith Kohlmann started his presentation at 7:52 pm. It was originally a program from Russ Porter's son Bob Porter, presented at the 2025 National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) convention in Novi, Michigan (NW of Detroit). Keith Kohlmann took it over and added some more technical information and corrections. Russell D. Porter was a railfan, artist, historian, and modeler his whole life. He grew up near the Chicago & North Western close to Chicago. He worked in Milwaukee, for Trains magazine and for Railroad Model Craftsman. He witnessed and documented a lot of our local railroad history. He was a long-time member of the Wisconsin Chapter of the NRHS. Eight of the 25 in-person attendees at the church raised their hands to indicate they knew him. He passed away in 2001 at age 83, leaving behind a large volume of work. Keith Schmidt helped Russ's daughter, who worked with Keith at the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department, go through some of that work. There were a few short freeze-ups due to Zoom having problems with Apple. The presentation ended at 8:43 pm. A short question and answer session followed.

Conclusion

Recording stopped at 8:50 pm. There was no informal on-line discussion group. The Zoom meeting room closed at 8:53 pm. Respectfully Submitted

Thomas W. Marcussen

From the President

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Happy Holidays to everyone. I'm not sure when this issue will arrive. It might arrive before Christmas or after. Either way I hope the holiday season is enjoyable.

We now look towards 2026 and our 76th year. 2026 is also the 250th anniversary of the founding of this great United States. I was 12 years old for the 200th anniversary and I remember a few things. One thing I recall was the many railroads painted locomotives in special paint schemes to recognize the celebration. A few railroads have already unveiled their 250th anniversary locomotives. Hopefully more will be coming.

I would like to see the chapter host some events that involve the 250th anniversary of the United States. I'm not sure what they are yet. Hopefully plans will come together as the year moves forward.

February is the chapter's annual meeting. Reports will be given and there is the election. Every year every officer position and board member is up for election. There is currently one vacancy on the board of directors. If you are looking for a way to become more involved in the chapter consider running for a position. Like Jim Wrinn would say "Get Busy Livin".



In Memoriam

Robert "Bob" Joyce July 20, 1937 to November 25, 2025

Longtime Wisconsin Chapter member Bob Joyce passed away on November 25, 2025. Bob was very active in the chapter up until very recently.

Bob was a past President from 1972-73. Bob was also the editor of Sparks and Cinders from 1989 until 2013. Bob was also the chapter's National Representative for many years. Bob attended many national conventions. He did a presentation regarding those conventions in 2023. Below is the obituary for Bob Joyce. Thank You for your dedication to the chapter.

Robert (Bob) Joyce was born on July 20, 1937, in Kansas City, Missouri, and went home to be with the Lord on November 25, 2025. He lived most of his childhood years in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, until he graduated from college at which time he moved to Wisconsin.

He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Family was very important to him.

He is preceded in death by his mother Esther (nee Baumgardt) Joyce and his father Edgar Joyce

He is survived by his wife Jo Anne (nee Weinke), his two Sons, Joel Anthony with his wife, Therese, and Mark Robert with his wife, Tracy, his grandchildren Anthony, Alexis, Joel and Michael, and his sister Caroline Barbara Joyce.

Bob was with Milwaukee Public Schools for 31 years. He taught high school electronics. Then he supervised the audio/visual program for several years and ended his career as an elementary school librarian. After that he worked at Plank Road Publishing as an editor for their music educators magazine part time.

He and his wife, Jo Anne, who met in college, played trumpet in the Wauwatosa Community Band, jazz band, and pit orchestras, for over 35 years.

Bob loved trains - the big ones - particularly steam engines. He did a lot of traveling on trains. He and Jo Anne did a lot of traveling - favorite destinations were New York City (to see musical theatre as well as sight seeing) and Hawaii. There were other places as well - too numerous to list.

Friday January 2 2026
850,000 miles by Private Rail Car
by Nona Hill and Clark Johnson

The private railcar Caritas travelled over 850,000 miles throughout North America from its rebirth in 1984 until sold in 2019. Designed to carry 8 guests and a crew of two, it sports an open platform, full kitchen, dining for eight and a lounge with oversized windows. Many of its miles were on freight trains and off scheduled passenger routes. High Iron Travel, which owned the car, focused on "rare mileage" trips – on routes normally inaccessible. High Iron ran seventeen "Explorers" trips, each extending over 7 days. In addition there were six trips to Mexico and many shorter excursions. In this presentation we will focus on some of the more exotic trips and on the nature of the "mileage collector" clan; our customers who will make enormous efforts to cover the last "100 yards" and how working with the railroads to arrange these adventures has changed (not for the better). Clark Johnson is a physicist by vocation and a railroader by avocation. His interest in private cars resulted from his desire to cover as much railway trackage as possible. Since much of the North American rail network was "freight service only" he envisioned tacking a private car on freight trains. That worked for a while in the 1980s when his car Caritas started traveling. He found a small cadre of fellow mileage collectors that made special trains possible. The Caritas covered over 850,000 miles throughout North America. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and a Fellow of the Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers. Nona Hill's picture was published in the Wisconsin State Journal before she even had a name. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has served as an officer for both the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers and All Aboard Wisconsin. Both groups are advocates for more and better passenger service in that state. She met Clark Johnson in 1991 on a trip he was operating on the Wisconsin and Calumet Railroad. By 1992 she was part of High Iron Travel, Clark's life and countless travel opportunities on planes, trains and automobiles. She has served as Treasurer for the Center of Railroad Photography and Art since 2013.



Caritas brings up the markers on a train headed into Hoosac tunnel, April 13, 2021. Photo by Wayne Hills.

Annual Chapter Business Meeting
February 7 2026

At the chapter meeting in February we will conduct the business of the chapter. This meeting is important to insure the chapter will continue operate and follow the rules that apply to it.

There will several reports including a treasurers report and membership report.

One item of business that is also a part of the annual meeting is the election of officers and board members. Any member in good standing of the chapter and the national can ran for an office or board position. Our board is currently a member short. According to our bylaws there should be 4 officers and 5 board members. A total of 9 people that way there shouldn't be a tie in a vote. At this time there are 4 officers and 4 board members. We need to fill the position.

If you would like to get more involved in the running of the chapter please let me know at president@nrhswis.org. Please consider getting more involved.

Without willing volunteers, events like the ones that happened in 2025 wouldn't have come to fruition. Let's keep the chapter moving.

Current Chapter Officers and Board Members

President Keith Schmidt
Vice President Ward Wells
Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek
Secretary Tom Marcussen
Board Members Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure,
Mike Yuhas, Neal Wegner and Vacant

Out and About with the Chapter

The Chapter sponsored a table at Trainfest at the Baird Center over the weekend of November 1-2, 2025. 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 Brian Hechel, Ralph McClure, Neal and Cathy Wegner, Ward Wells and Ron Zeise promoted the Chapter and NRHS.

We're waiting for confirmation of a table at the February 21-22, 2026 Mad-City show in Madison. If we get a table, we will welcome any support from chapter members during the show. Photo by Cate Kratville-Wrinn



Winter Railroading in Southeastern Wisconsin



On January 25th, 2018 the Union Pacific's Cudahy Job was powered by UPY GP15-1 No. 732 as it made its way down the Kenosha Subdivision in St. Francis, WI. Photo by Dan Grudzielanek



CN #8329 leads a northbound stack train at Duplainville on November 29 2025. Photo by Keith Schmidt



CP #8100 leads westbound Train #247 at Duplainville on November 29 2025. Photo by Keith Schmidt



It's not a train but they kept the roads clear for the railfans out in the snow. Town of Lisbon plows on Duplainville Road Photo by Keith Schmidt

CP #8757 "Every Child Matters" unit leads a eastbound train at Waterford Ave on Milwaukee's southside. March 2023. Photo by Keith Schmidt



Do You Know Part 2

by Dave Nelson

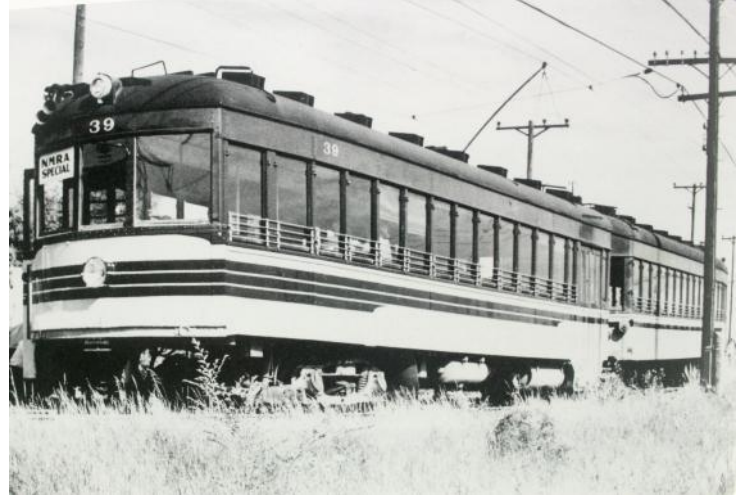
In the popular press Jay Maeder was regarded as entirely at fault for running a red signal and was portrayed as a rich man playing with his trains. He faced criminal prosecution from the Coroner's Jury, but the judge determined that Maeder and other Speedrail employees were at most negligent, which does not support criminal charges. Yet another accident, and problems in retaining and securing insurance, doomed Speedrail after the disaster and it went bankrupt. The bankruptcy trustee considered rival proposals to acquire the line and keep it running. While one of the more thorough proposals was from Jay Maeder, the trustee felt that the traveling public would regard Maeder's involvement as an indication that Speedrail was unsafe. Eventually the trustee determined that Speedrail could not be made into a going concern, and it was liquidated.

It was a different era; an editorial in the October 1950 issue of Model Railroader contains this naive comment: "Speedrail carried \$500,000 in liability insurance which should cover the financial liability involved." For ten dead? For 47 wounded some of whom spent weeks in the hospital? No, it did not -- not nearly. The dead ranged in age from 23 to 51: Emil "Pop" Beck (a famous organizer of passenger train trips to NMRA conventions); Huntley Burroughs; William Greenaway; Raymond Kratt; Marian Kratt (Raymond's wife; three other Kratts were seriously injured); William Roberts; Charles Sulzbach; William Wight (a Model Railroader magazine art staffer, recently married with an infant daughter); John Williams; and Gerald Greer (Speedrail employee). 39-40 was scrapped on site; Speedrail had no money to repair 1192-1193.

Sources for this article include: Larry Sakar, "Speedrail - Milwaukee's Last Rapid Transit?" (Interurban Press 1991); John Page, "At the Throttle: Ten Killed, 47 Injured When Interurban Fan Trip Trains Collide at Milwaukee NMRA Convention Labor Day Weekend," (Model Railroader October 1950, p. 11); John Page, "Looking Back With John Page: The NMRA's 15th Anniversary Convention Fan Trip Collision," (Model Railroader April 1987, p. 36); George Gloff, "An Eyewitness Account," (Model Railroader April 1987, p. 37).



Remains of Car Set #39-#40. It was scrapped at the location of the wreck.



Speedrail Lightweight Car Set #39-#40. This was set that was operated by Jay Maeder. The NMRA Special sign in the window.

Merry Christmas Happy Holidays and Happy New Year !!



*Happy
New Year*

From the Archives

January 1951—75 Years Ago Special

The first issue of Sparks & Cinders (although the publication did not have a name at the time) was published on January 2, 1951. One of the articles was by Jim Scribbins and re-counted the last day of operation of the Port Washington interurban line, Easter Sunday, March 18, 1948. The equipment was articulated car no. 1198-1199. It left Port Washington at 4:59 p.m., less than 1/3 full. "On the East (South) side of the track between Port and Grafton steel power line towers were lying on their sides waiting to be put up on the abandoned ROW.

January 1956—70 Years Ago

Steam News: Milwaukee Road: Six types are running in the Milwaukee area: 0-6-0, 2-6-2, 4-6-0, 2-8-0, 2-8-2, and 4-8-4. Burlington: They have been running a number of Northerns and 2-10-4s into Chicago and Galesburg. Get 'em while you can! Nickel Plate: Brewster, Ohio, was alive with 2-8-4s. Pennsylvania: Steam activity on the Pennsy is heavy, with Decapod 1-1s and 2-10-4s running up to Sandusky, frequent double-heading, and Consolidations doing yard chores. Norfolk & Western: Steam in profusion. Seen recently were 2-6-6-4s on freight, Mountains on passenger, and, once-in-awhile a 4-8-2 on a local freight. This road is by no means dieselized yet.

January 1961 - 65 Years Ago

Green Bay & Western took delivery on November 30 of the 310, the first Alco DL-640 road switcher delivered to any U. S. road. It is a 2400 hp locomotive and, while Alco has other road switchers, they are all equipped with 6-wheel trucks. The DL-640 uses 4-wheel trucks for added tractive effort, since all axles are powered and thus all the weight is on the drivers. This also means more pay for the crews, as their pay is partially determined by weight-on-drivers. The 310 is the largest unit on the GB&W, replacing a 12-year-old 1500 hp road freight unit. As of this writing, she had undergone shakedown runs Green Bay-Kewaunee, but no regular assignment had been given. A possibility is that it might handle time freights 3 and 4, Green Bay-Winona.

January 1966 - 60 Years Ago

This issue of S&C highlighted a continuing problem for S&C editors producing the January issue – it must be put together during the holidays. This issue consisted of just three pages (the back of the second sheet was blank). The new officers and the program content were listed but little else. (Editor Note—its still a concern today)

January 1971—55 Years Ago

The Soo Line has applied for abandonment of the Greenwood branch, running from Marshfield, and the Athens branch, running from Abbotsford....Editor Bob Adams reported on the C&NW's new jet snowblower. After seeing it in action the editor felt that perhaps while the contraption does the intended job, it may be a case of overkill. An editorial by Jerry Hil-ton about the proposed startup of Railpax (Amtrak), scheduled to startup on May 1st, questions the absence of Milwaukee from the list of cities to be served

January 1976—50 Years Ago

Note was made of the passing of Jay Maeder, the owner of the Speedrail system in the Milwaukee area in 1949 and 1950.... The Ann Arbor Railroad announced that carferry service between Frankfort, Michigan, and Kewaunee and Manitowoc, Wisconsin, would be suspended on February 26.... Mid-Continent Railway Museum is scheduling winter steam operations on January 17 and 18.

January 1981 - 45 Years Ago

Tom Hoffmann reports that the South Shore Line Little Joe electrics are living on borrowed time and recommends that fans get their photos as soon as possible.... Richard B. Ogilvie, bankruptcy trustee for the Milwaukee Road, will file a reorganization plan with the Court on January 15 for "Milwaukee II." He is also seeking authority to borrow up to \$54 million from subsidiary and escrow accounts for continued operation

January 1986 - 40 Years Ago

Bob Baker reports that work is well underway on the Chapter's proposed publication, the new "Railfan's Guide to Wisconsin".... Chris Burger has been appointed Vice President- Investor Relations of the C&NW and will be moving to Chicago....Dorothy Wiener is the new editor of Sparks & Cinders. Tom Hoffmann has retired the editor's green eye shade after 11 years.

January 1991 —35 Years Ago

The Illinois Railway Museum at Union, Illinois, announced that the restored Electroliner, Nos. 801-802, will return to service on February 8, 1991, the 50th Anniversary of its inaugural run in 1941....Scenic Rail Dining is no longer operating over the WSOR, the equipment having been sold to a dinner train operator in California.

January 1996 —30 Years Ago

Wisconsin Central ended 100 years of street running in Oshkosh on January 27 with a ceremonial last train and pulling of a spike to symbolize closing the line. Operations were shifted to the ex-FRV, ex-C&NW line running on the east side of Oshkosh....Metra is set to begin operations on a 41-mile segment of the WC. Metra will pay WC \$2.5 million per year for trackage rights

January 2001— 25 Years Ago

The rail industry version of a soap opera continues to unfold in the battle for control of the Wisconsin Central between management and deposed CEO Ed Burkhardt. As of December 14, the proxies were 29.7% for Burkhardt and 19.8% for management. Amtrak has 85 new P42s arriving and some of them will be assigned to the Empire Builder. Some have already been observed on the Builder....UP is looking at the Rochelle area for a new intermodal terminal.

January 2006 — 20 Years Ago

Mid-Continent Railway Museum's 31st annual Snow Train™ is set to depart from the North Freedom depot during the weekend of February 17-19, 2006. All cars are heated either with steam or coal-fired stoves. The museum's 1944-built Alco S-1 diesel will again pull the trains. Trips will last about 50 minutes

January 2011 — 15 Years Ago

Talgo Inc. will shut down its Milwaukee train manufacturing operations in 2012, leaving only a maintenance base, because plans for a high-speed rail line between Milwaukee and Madison have been abandoned, the company announced December 10. The Spanish-owned company acted after the federal government withdrew nearly all of the \$810 million in stimulus funding for the rail project. Union Pacific raised the speed limit on its ex-Chicago & North Western Adams Line between Milwaukee and Adams. The speed increased from 25 to 50 mph on the 112-mile line, which once hosted C&NW's Twin Cities 400 streamliner.

January 2016 — 10 Years Ago

Woodward Iron Co. Baldwin 2-10-0 No. 41 will be a giant Christmas present for the Age of Steam roundhouse at Sugar Creek, Ohio. The decapod was scheduled to be loaded aboard a heavy-duty flatcar Tuesday, according to Tim Sposato of Age of Steam. "We hope to see it at the roundhouse before Christmas," Sposato tells Trains. A precise arrival date is difficult to predict because the rail move is over several railroads, he noted. Sposato says the tender was trucked to Sugar Creek about a month ago. The tender body was on one trailer, while the frame and trucks were on a second rig. Age of Steam owner Jerry Joe Jacobson bought the locomotive in May 2015 from the Mid-Continent Railroad Museum in North Freedom. The loco-motive, built in 1928 for the Alabama Tennessee & Northern, was acquired by the Woodward Iron Co. in 1948 and retired in 1959.

January 2021 — 5 Years Ago

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic meetings were still being held virtually. The hope is to return to in person meetings when it's deemed safe to do so. On December 5 2020 the final wigwag crossing was removed under the cover of darkness. The signal protected Seamann Ave in Sheboygan WI. The crossing is now protected by a stop sign. The crossing was visited by numerous railfans in the weeks leading up to its removal. It was mentioned that the signal was being preserved but there was no further information on where it was going.

The Big Picture



The approach signal to the St Francis interlocking shines with a yellow signal. The tracks and right of way show off the undisturbed recent snowfall. Photo is looking north from Van Norman Ave in Cudahy WI on Sunday November 30 2025. Photo by Keith Schmidt