

The



TRAINMASTER



Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, National Railway Historical Society.

SEPTEMBER 1992

CHAPTER TIMETABLE NO. 360

REGULAR RUNS

WHY TRAINS HAVE RED MARKERS

Red is the universal color symbol indicating danger. How this came about is probably lost in the vastness of long ago. The rear of any train (freight trains in recent years have switched to FRED; Flashing Rear End Device) is identified by red markers. I have an opinion as to how this came about.

In the late 1840's, there was a wreck on the Pennsylvania Central. A train had stopped in the dark because of a broken axle. A following train rammed into the standing train, causing loss of life and much damage.

A few evenings after the wreck, Jane G. Swisshelm was walking along the railroad tracks between Wilkinsburg and Swissvale, Pennsylvania, when a train passed her. She was impressed by the brilliant white headlight as the train approached and by the suddenness of its disappearance into the darkness. With account of the Pennsylvania Central wreck fresh in her mind, she thought "no train should run at night without a red light on the rear platform."

The next day she wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh Saturday Visitor urging the adoption of such a precautionary rule. This became an

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday, September 10, 7:00pm, at room 208, Union Station. Down there where all the Amtrak trains come in. All Chapter members are welcome.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING Friday, September 18, 7:30pm, at Portland General Electric auditorium on SE 17th Avenue between Powell and Holgate. The business meeting will start promptly at 7:30, with the newsreel and program following after a short break. Refreshments will be available; please bring some money to feed the "kitty" so Kitty can continue to feed you. The program is listed below.

WEEKLY NO-HOST LUNCHEON every Saturday, 12:00 noon, at the Semaphore Restaurant at SE 17th Avenue and Holgate Blvd. Our group sits in the back. Come on down!

ROLLING STOCK WORK SESSIONS every Tuesday and Saturday, at the Chapter's tracks in Brooklyn Yards. Working hours are 9am to 3-4pm on Tuesday, 10am to late afternoon on Saturday. There's a lot of work of all kinds to be done. Contact Richard Gray (656-0260) or Bob Hoffman (236-7710) to see what you can do.

LIBRARY/ ARCHIVES WORK SESSION Thursday, September 10, 1 to 4pm & Saturday, September 19, 9:30am to 12:00 noon at Room 1, Union Station. Help is needed to get things organized and catalogued. Contact Jerry Webbat 298-8163 or Bob Weaver at 654-4274 for more information—or just show up! There's lots of work to do.

CHAPTER LIBRARY OPEN HOURS Saturday, September 19 & 26, 1:30 to 4pm at Room 1, Union Station.

EXTRA BOARD

PNWC EXCURSION Seattle Steamboat trip with a visit to the *Spirit of Washington* dinner train. We will be travelling on Amtrak of course! September 12th - 13th

SALEM SWAP MEET & SHOW October 3rd & 4th sponsored by Willamette Valley Model Railroad Club Jackman Long Building 2330 17th Street NE Salem, Or

2nd ANNUAL PNWC TILLAMOOK "Salt-Air" EXCURSION October 17th -18th Leaving from Banks, Oregon

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SEPTEMBER MEETING PROGRAM

to be Announced

Program begins after business meeting

Notice: Programs are needed for future meetings. Anyone who is willing to present a program (slides, film, etc.) at a Chapter meeting, please contact Chuck Bukowsky 284-7277

The TRAINMASTER

is the official newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, published monthly for the benefit of its members. Articles which appear in *The Trainmaster* do not express the official National Railway Historical Society position on any subject unless specifically noted as such. Material from *The Trainmaster* may be reprinted in other publications provided credit is given as to the source. **Please address contributions, correspondence, and exchange copies of newsletters to:**

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Chuck Storz - 289-4529

MEMBERSHIP in the PNWC-NRHS is available as follows:

Regular...\$27/yr.
Joint...\$32/yr.

For more information contact the Membership Chairman, at the above address.

DEADLINES

are terrible things, but they pop up every month without fail. **The deadline for each issue of *The Trainmaster* is the 20th of the previous month.** I always try to squeeze in late material, but I can't guarantee that anything received after the 20th will make it—be warned!

—MC

editorial. Within a week every night train operating on the Pennsylvania Central had a red light on the rear platform. Jane Swisshelm believed the red lights were the result of her suggestion.

During the next 25 years, more or less, Swisshelm observed that most railroads had adopted a rule requiring a red light to be displayed at the rear of every train at night and during foggy or stormy weather. In 1873, her curiosity prompted her to write a letter to the editor of *The Railroad Gazette*, describing her experience of the late 1840's and the letter that was published in the *Saturday Visitor*. This letter was also published. It ended,

"Now, as women do so little in the line of original suggestions and inventions, I would like to know if I was the first to think of this beginning of the present signal system, that we may have this much more on the credit page of our general account."

If anyone other than Jane Swisshelm was first to see the safety factor of a red light on the rear of a train, I never heard about it during my 45 years as a railroader and rail fan. In any case she deserves honorable mention in both railroad history and folklore.

by Orville P. Convis

Robert J. Lewis collection

reprinted from the *Crew Caller* newsletter, November 1991

Bits and Pieces

-The Cape Cod Railroad painted their recently acquired FP10's 1100 and 1114 into a Great Northern inspired livery. The units were acquired from Boston's MBTA commuter railroad and were originally ex-GM&O F3/F7.

-Speaking of GN, the Lake Shore Railway Society in North East Pennsylvania reportedly has ex-GN diner "Lake Wenatchee" in it's collection. The Mad River & NKP Railroad Society of Bellevue, Ohio stores ex-GN sleeper Lewis and Clark Pass, now privately owned, in it's coach yard.

-The Algoma Central is leasing 22 ex-via Rail 70-seat coaches and two steam generator cars until sometime in 1994. The new cars will replace the current roster of cars on a one for one basis, thus the 'old' cars (including at least three sets of former Southern Pacific articulated cars) will be retired.

-Amtrak has a former SP diner, plus several former US army single door baggage cars for sale.

-Rob Piecuch

UP 3985 SET FOR 1993 NRHS CHICAGO CONVENTION

The Chicago Chapter will host the first ever Union Pacific steam excursion from Chicago during the 1993 Convention next July.

The featured locomotive will be the famous Union Pacific #3985 Challenger, with an 18-car consist including three dome cars. Typical of Union Pacific operations, the consist will be clean, efficient, comfortable, and first rate.

This special train will compliment the many and varied quality activities and attractions planned for the first NRHS Convention ever to be held in Chicago.

-Green Block

CHAPTER BUSINESS

SUMMARY OF MINUTES - BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - AUGUST 13, 1992

The meeting was called to order by Chapter V.P. Dave Van Sickle at 7:10 PM.

The board passed the following motion at its August meeting: Authorized payment from savings of the \$4500 owed to Bob Steele for body bolster inspection on the Chapter's three cars while at Tillamook.

Finance Committee: Dave Van Sickle reported that the finance committee met last evening with representatives from several committees attending for the first time. Several C.D.'s are due to expire shortly. The board agreed to let the finance committee decide where to reinvest the money. Treasurer Maxine Rodabaugh advised that letters of notification need to be sent calling \$4300 of face value in Chapter bonds for redemption.

Excursions: Bob Hoffman reported for Irv Ewen that 155 tickets have been sold for the Seattle trip and 88 for the Tillamook trip. The excursion committee is planning to upgrade the dress code for Chapter car hosts.

Locomotives: Peter Rodabaugh reported that the Baldwin AS616 has been unloaded at Albina. The Alaska locomotive has been loaded at Seattle. It has been released to move and should be in Portland in about a week.

Rolling Stock: Peter Rodabaugh reported that the rolling stock committee wants to have car 3300 ready for the fall Tillamook trip. All the locomotive parts have been moved from Hines, OR to Portland on a donated move.

Concessions: Marilyn Edgar reported good sales at the annual Antique Powerland show at Brooks, OR.

National Director Bob Hoffman reported that the NRHS national organization has appointed a Chapter development person for the Western United States. National has published a new membership application. The NRHS has begun offering corporate and contributory memberships. Jerry Webb has withdrawn his name from renomination as NRHS Northwest Vice President. The next NRHS national convention will be in Chicago.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary

SUMMARY OF MINUTES - REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING - AUGUST 21, 1992

The meeting was called to order by President Chuck Bukowsky at 7:38 PM.

Treasurer Maxine Rodabaugh reported the bill for loading the AS616 locomotive at Boise by Morrison-Knudson was \$4271.00. The finance committee has voted to pay off another 10% of the Chapter rolling stock improvement bonds. Letters have gone out to the bond holders.

The membership passed the following motion at the August meeting: Established a contributions account to receive any donations to help with the expenses of moving the Georgia Pacific railroad shop equipment from Powers, OR to Portland.

Excursions: Marilyn Edgar reported sales of over 160 seats for the Seattle Steamboat trip and 88 for the fall Tillamook trip. Ads for the Seattle trip will be in The Oregonian and the Columbian next week. Ads for the Tillamook trip will follow shortly after.

Concessions: Marilyn Edgar reported good sales at the annual Antique Powerland show at Brooks, OR. Concessions will be selling at the coming Salem swap meet.

San Jose Convention: Jerry Webb reported that the NRHS has been divided into 16 regions. There is now an NRHS Chapter in England. President Chuck Bukowsky advised that Jerry Webb is not running for re-election as NRHS Northwest V.P. and asked for suggestions for nominees for the position. Chuck also reported that 13 Chapter members attended the national convention in San Jose.

Museum: Chuck Bukowsky reported for Dave Stimac that the Chapter's proposed museum site is changing due to changes by OMSI and changes to the I-5 ramp to McLoughlin by the Oregon Dept. of Transportation.

Nominating Committee: President Chuck Bukowsky announced that he is forming a committee to nominate 1993 Chapter officers.

Futures Committee/By Laws: Chuck Bukowsky announced that he will be asking the Futures Committee to reorganize as the by laws committee to propose by law changes to be voted on at the November meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary

NEWS—HISTORY—TRAVEL

Railroad News

BURLINGTON NORTHERN

A Dome-to-Dome commuter rail link between Seattle and Tacoma could be operating by 1994, reports *The Trainsheet* newsletter of the Tacoma Chapter NRHS.

The line would most likely run on Burlington Northern tracks with stations at Tacoma, Puyallup, Auburn, Kent, Renton and Seattle. Congress approved \$25 million in November of '91 with the remaining \$100 million expected to be put on a ballot measure this November.

The Trainsheet also reports that Stampede Pass has recently been removed from the federal list of lines scheduled to be abandoned. Measures aimed at protecting threatened salmon runs on the Snake River may end up shutting down barge traffic on the Snake River west of Lewiston, Idaho. Drawing down reservoirs as planned would cut off a major transportation link for grain shippers.

At the same time, however, the restrictions imposed by the Columbia Gorge Commission might prevent the railroad from taking steps to increase operations on its route through the Columbia River National Scenic Area. The railroad now runs 50 to 60 trains a day along the north bank road.

"We have no immediate plans to reopen Stampede," railroad spokesman Howard Kalio said. "Our main option is to increase capacity in the gorge, Stampede Pass becomes our fallback."

Northern Pacific first surveyed the route in 1881. The survey party reportedly fell apart over a company no-work-no-eat policy. The pass was named for the 'stampede' of workers down the valley.

The May 1, 1992 issue of *RAILS* stated that Burlington Northern will begin selling branch lines to short line operators again, after a 5-year lapse. A memorandum stated that BN will begin to "'shortline' every line throughout the system which does not handle at least 3 to 5 million gross ton miles per year." The program will begin this summer. First lines to be sold or leased will be those in Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Montana, Idaho and Washington. BN will only deal with a limited list of bidders. Unlike UP and Santa Fe, BN will not offer packages of lines. Most deals will be single lines of 50 to 200 miles. BN will continue to market the lines as if they were operated by BN. In effect, BN will be granting a haulage right to the shortlines.

-Arkansas Railroader

AMTRAK

Passengers 62 and older can now receive 15% discount off Amtrak's lowest one-way and round-trip fares.

A laundering mishap shrunk 450 Amtrak sleeping car blankets, which were then donated to homeless shelters.

-Cinders

In case you haven't ridden lately - Amtrak trains; Southwest Chief, Capitol Limited and Coast Starlight have restored 'dining' service which includes; ceramic dinnerware, glass, stainless steel flatware and linen table clothes. This is a welcome change. My last experience eating on Amtrak included styrofoam plates, plastic knives, and -well I guess you would call it a hamburger. Maybe Amburger would be appropriate.

The travel industry slump has continued to hold down Amtrak's revenue and ridership growth. During the period of October to December 1991, revenue was \$11 million below projections. Ridership was 7% and passenger miles about 2% the same time in 1990. To offset a projected \$67 million revenue shortfall for the entire Fiscal Year 1992, Amtrak announced a number of cost-saving measures in January:

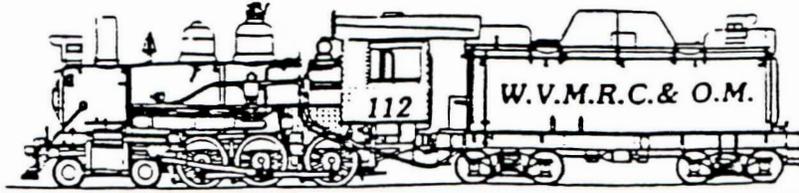
1. Frozen management salaries
2. Furloughs of 2¹/₂ - 3¹/₂ months for about 1,000 of the 1,250 maintenance employees at Beech Grove
3. Continued eliminating positions through attrition or furloughs
4. Adjust train consists to better match ridership demand
5. Possible train frequencies and route adjustments during the spring and summer of 1992

The above actions are subject to revision as Amtrak's business rebounds. Amtrak President W. Graham Claytor, Jr. said these actions are "...extremely regrettable," but that it is "...absolutely necessary for Amtrak to balance its costs and income during the current fiscal year..."

-The Timetable

A bill has been proposed in the House which would create an 'intercity rail passenger capital improvement trust fund'. The funds would come from a one penny per gallon tax on gasoline. This penny would not be added to the current gas tax, but would use one of the two and one-half pennies per gallon currently being used for debt reduction.

-Callboard



Saturday & Sunday
 October 3rd & 4th
 1992

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 1992

Swap Meet & Show

Salem, Oregon

The Willamette Valley Model Railroad Club
 Is Sponsoring a Swap Meet & Show
 At The Jackman Long Building, 2330 17th Street N.E.
 Salem, Oregon

ALL GAUGES OF MODEL TRAINS WILL BE RUNNING

Admission:

Adults \$2.00
 Children (under 12) Free

Hours:

General Public: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm Saturday
 11:00 am to 4:00 pm Sunday
 Sellers: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Both days

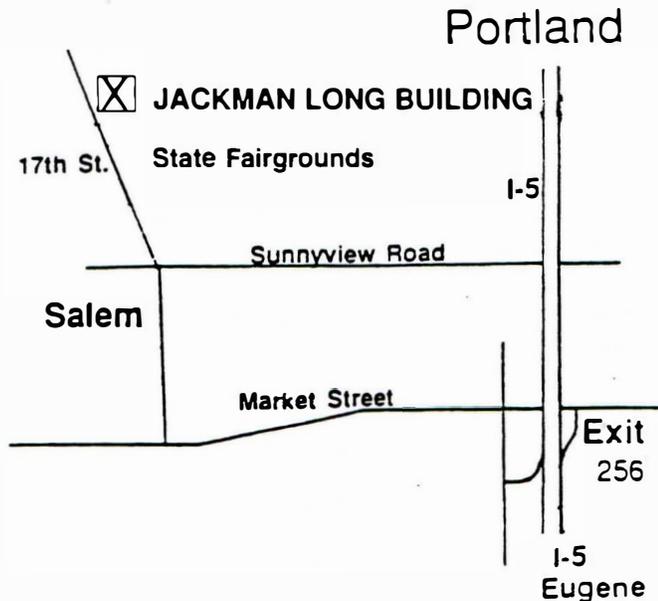
Tables:

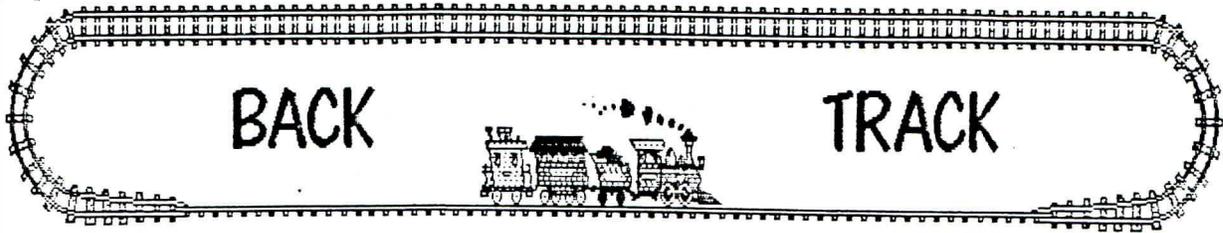
\$15.00 Second Day FREE
 Remittance in advance

**ONE OF THE NORTHWEST'S
 LARGEST
 SWAPMEETS...
 OVER 200 TABLES...**

Contact:

Bill Geisler, Chairman
 2550 Wayside Terrace NE
 Salem, OR 97303 362-0582





BACK TRACK - PNWC members' railway experiences

This in from John L. and Wanda Keefer, Waldport, OR, PNWC members since 1984. John is particularly interested in restoring steam locomotives, narrow gauge railroads and their routes, and displaying railroad memorabilia.

John says, "Looking back over my 44 years experience of railroading with Southern Pacific Transportation Company, I can truly say that the days and nights spent working with steam power are the most memorable. My job as a brakeman and conductor was fun and exciting—during those years from 1943 to the end of steam in 1958, and are alive in my memories as if it were only yesterday.

John tells us that a new NRHS chapter has been organized at Toledo, Oregon. Their name is Yaquina Pacific, and they welcome anyone to join up with them. Their main fun project is to restore the steam locomotive "One Spot" on display at Toledo since 1960. Volunteers are welcome!

John shares the following exciting experience with us:

"One of my most exciting railroad experiences happened at Oakridge, Oregon, in 1953. I was working the head-end brakeman's job on the local freight, when the swing brakeman rolled a gondola down the main track, and he discovered the hand brake would not stop the car on the one-percent grade. By the time the conductor and rear brakeman and I found out the car was running away, it was a half mile down the main-line and going fast heading in the direction of Eugene, 45 miles away

Our steam engine was taking water near the depot so we yelled to the engineer and fireman that Borgie (the swingman) couldn't stop the gondola. They stopped taking water and we headed down the main to catch the gondola and Borgie. I rode the pilot and the hogger sailed that hog engine down the track as fast as possible slowing on the curves and blind spots so we couldn't crash into the gondola if Borgie happened to get the hand brake to take ahold and stop the gondola.

We sped along like this for five miles through two tunnels and a lot of curves, getting a glimpse of the gondola once in awhile as it travelled ahead of us. Finally on a straight piece of track we caught up and coupled and got stopped. Borgie's face was white as snow from reefing on that hand brake and from fright, too. We returned to Oakridge and were met there by a crowd of excited folks. None of them could have been as excited as the Oakridge local crew was on that day!!"

We would appreciate it if you would fill out the following Rails and Railroading interest survey questionnaire. Please send your replies to:

Orin and Karyl Knee
735 S.W. St Clair Ave., Apt. 1410, Portland, OR 97205 (503) 227-7198

RAILROAD/RAIL INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

"Back Track"

1. What is your name?

2. When did you join the National Railway Historical Society? _____

3. When did you join the Pacific Northwest Chapter? _____

4. Do other members of your family belong? Name(s)?

5. What are your interests in current or historic rail and railroading: For example: modeling, excursions, steam, trolley, narrow-gage, light rail, old routes, facilities, modern planning, etc.

6. What have been your most exciting or memorable experiences in railroading?

(If you need more room, please attach additional pages)

7. Are there other comments or observations you would like to make regarding this survey? _____

8. Would you approve of your contributions to this survey being summarized in an article in the Trainmaster?
Yes _____, No _____

9. If the above answer is Yes, what is your address and telephone number?

Telephone: (Area code): _____ Number: _____ - _____

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Activities: Vacant
Meeting Program Coordinator: Vacant
Bylaws: Vacant
Concessions: Marilyn Edgar, 236-7271
Excursions: Irv Ewen, 232-2441
Finance: Vacant
Library & Historical Foundation: Jerry Webb,
298-8163
Membership: Tammy Auburg, (206) 694-7769
Museum: Dave Stimac, 656-9392
Public Relations: Al McCready, 281-2415
Publications: Vacant
Rolling Stock: Richard Gray, 656-0260
Chief Mech. Off.: Peter Rodabaugh, 771-8545
Car Rental Agent: Peter Rodabaugh, 771-8545
Ad Hoc Property Development: Al McCready,
281-2415
Ad Hoc "Union Station": Terry Parker, 284-8742
Chapter representative, Portland Rail Equipment
Advisory Group: Bob Hoffman, 236-7710

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2513 NE 232nd Av, Camas, WA 98607
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5230 SE Center St, Portland, OR 97206
Jerry Schuler - 285-7941
2034 N Webster St, Portland, OR 97217

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