



# RAIL REPORT

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Rocky Mountain Railroad Club

Rocky Mountain Railroad  
Historical Foundation

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April 2025

Issue 772

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--- **Special Meeting on April 8 at Barnes Hall** ---



**Please join us for an extremely important business meeting at Christ Church at 2950 S. University Boulevard in Denver. Following the business meeting we will have an enjoyable, educational presentation.**

**Traveling here from Durango, Colorado, Jeff Johnson and Mike Ramsey will give a presentation on April 8th about American Heritage Railways and it's various subsidiary companies and what they do. A question and answer session will follow after a video presentation.**

**Some of the topics include:**

**Contract restoration of D&RGW car 211**

**Rail Events and Polar Express**

**Assisting the Abilene & Smokey Valley with FRA inspection of their steam locomotive.**

**This is the last meeting that we have scheduled, at least for the near future. There will likely be some give-away items, so please bring a bag or box to take things home in. We want to see as many members here as possible, so please come and visit with friends.**

There is off-street parking on the south side of the complex. All programs are intended to provide an educational experience on railroading. The general public is welcome to attend. There is no charge for this meeting that starts at 7:30 pm.

Or Join the Zoom Meeting with this link - - -  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86251105134?pwd=VWRwRUVCbVoyTzhwMWhYbm5scTIqdz09>  
Meeting ID: 862 5110 5134 Passcode: 496652

## **Upcoming Events:**

**We have an opportunity to visit the Union Pacific steam shop in Cheyenne on April 19. Jim Ehernberger will have the sign-up sheet at our April 8 meeting, so please see him if you want to get your name on the list. Alternatively, you may e-mail your request to the Club's e-mail address at [rails@rockymtnrrclub.org](mailto:rails@rockymtnrrclub.org)**

This event is on a Saturday morning at 10 a.m. If your plans are affected by this being on the day before Easter, be aware. We strongly encourage our members to carpool if at all possible since we will be parking on railroad property. We will all be required to sign a release agreement with the railroad.

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**There had been a tentative plan to have a "steam picnic" in mid-May. We will move the date of our annual Club picnic to some time this summer (probably in August) and are working on those details. This would allow more planning time for members who may travel farther.**

**We are not holding a meeting in May, and there will not be a Rail Report for that month.**

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**The "Colorado Crossings" annual event this year will have a theme of railfan interest groups such as ours. We encourage you to attend the Colorado Railroad Museum on the weekend of May 16-18, 2025. They will highlight a few cars that were saved by groups like ours.**

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**Rocky Mountain Train Show - Spring 2025  
April 5th & 6th at the  
National Western Complex  
4655 Humboldt Street  
Denver, Colorado 80216**

[Learn More](#)

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**Open house Saturdays at Como, Colorado:  
June 21 and July 19; The annual Boreas Pass  
Railroad Day will take place on August 16.**

## Special Meeting of the Club on April 8, 2025

Dear Members,

In accordance with our Articles of Incorporation and bylaws for both the Club and Foundation, we are required to have members vote on the question to dissolve the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation. The Colorado Railroad Museum is fully supportive of our plans to integrate with their organization. We will hold a special vote of our membership to proceed with the dissolution. This special business meeting will be held in conjunction with our regular April 8 meeting at Christ Church. We will set up methods for members who cannot attend in-person to vote.

Our bylaws define a quorum: "...25 members to be present. Each member of the corporation, at every meeting of the members, is entitled to one vote in person upon each subject properly given to vote. Members cannot grant vote proxies...(The Board will confirm that the Bylaws will allow virtual on live-stream voting for corporation meetings and not just regular meetings)...Meeting type, in-person and or virtual, is at the discretion of the Board."

Members will have received a letter in late March detailing more information about the vote to dissolve. Please try to set time aside to attend the meeting in-person at Christ Church or participate remotely by Zoom.

Thank you, Dave Goss

## **Royal Gorge F-Unit Return!**

The Royal Gorge F-Units are BACK after 4 years.

At the beginning of 2025, conversations arose about returning the Royal Gorge Route's EMD F7s back to service. The last time these locomotives led the Royal Gorge Passenger Train was back in May of 2021. The railroad's Mechanical and Operations team jumped at the opportunity and began the tedious work of getting the locomotives roadworthy in late February 2025. Over their recent stint in storage, various members of the railroad's Train Crew and Mechanical team were allotted occasional time to give the locomotive light little "tune ups"; making small repairs and adjustments, cleaning various components, and occasionally starting them up and letting them run. With this work accomplished, the work in February was straight forward. With procedures to coincide with FRA regulations, the locomotives were given a "tune up", with any known issues addressed and repaired. Any new issues unearthed during this process were dealt with quickly. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, F7-A #403 and F7-B #1503 were successfully fired up for the first time in well over a year and a half. On Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, the locomotives were placed on the head end of the passenger train and sent on a successful trip through the Royal Gorge under the command of Engineer Nick Valdez and Conductor Aaron Hamby. The locomotives were set to remain on the train through March 28<sup>th</sup>, and all are invited to stop by and go for a ride. Cab ride and general ticket information can be found at [royalgorgeroute.com](http://royalgorgeroute.com).

Nicholas A. Valdez  
Engineer, Conductor, DSLE  
Royal Gorge Route Railroad



Steve King, an engineer with The Cañon City & Royal Gorge Route, is happy to see the F-units back in service at Cañon City, CO, on February 27, 2025. CRRX 403, F7A, and 1503, F7B, returned to service on February 24, 2025. ©2025 Chip



The Royal Gorge Route F-units blasted out of Cañon City, CO, for the first time in four years on February 24, 2025. CRRX 403 and 1503, an F7B, are back taking passengers to the Royal Gorge and west to Parkdale, CO. © 2025 Bruce Barrett

## Webb Rail Private Varnish



Webb Rail private cars crossed Colorado on snowy February 20, 2024, on Amtrak train 6, the California Zephyr. Dome cars were Northern Pacific 549 dome coach and NP 513 dome sleeper. On the rear was Babbling Brook round-end observation lounge ex-New York Central RR. ©2025 Chip



PV Northern Pacific 313 dome sleeper in snowstorm at Denver Union Station, CO, February 20, 2025. Webb Rail private varnish had visited California and returned by Amtrak to Albany, New York State. ©2025 Chip





Webb Rail owned Babbling Brook round-end observation lounge with New England States neon drumhead brought up the rear on Amtrak's California Zephyr, train 6, at Fraser, CO, February 20, 2025. Snowstorm made roads very hazardous. ©2025 Chip

## **British Social Media Commentator Francis Bourgeois Visits U.P. Steam Shop**



British Instagram social media commentator Francis Bourgeois asked the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club to help with his visit to Colorado in March 2025. Mr. Bourgeois

arrived at Denver International Airport, CO, March 18, 2025. Thanks to Union Pacific's Ed Dickens for making time for Mr. Bourgeois and his crew to visit the UP's Steam Shop at Cheyenne, Wyoming, on March 19. This was one of the highlights of their trip.

After several of his videos went viral, Bourgeois began collaborating with celebrities such as Joe Jonas. He has authored one book, *The Trainspotter's Notebook*, and hosts the digital series *Trainspotting with Francis Bourgeois* for British Channel 4.

Francis Bourgeois had always dreamed of seeing the Big Boy and Ed Dickens and crew made that dream a reality!



London-based video crew and (right) Francis Bourgeois were in the USA to film a two-part series for United Kingdom audiences. UP Steam Shop, Cheyenne, WY, March 19, 2025. © Chip

[Learn More](#)

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This story comes from U.P.'s "Inside Track"

# Union Pacific Celebrates Inaugural CEO Excellence Award Recipients

**Union Pacific recently held its inaugural CEO Excellence Awards, honoring 41 employees who made tremendous strides advancing the railroad's Safety, Service, and Operational Excellence strategy. The awards acknowledge many of the employees who contributed to the railroad's historic performance in 2024.**

"A strategy is only as good as the culture that fuels it," said CEO **Jim Vena**. "These employees represent teams across our system who embody Union Pacific's strategy in action every day." Vena created the awards to celebrate the teams that pursue the possible and achieve it. During his remarks, he took time to recognize the thousands of employees not in the room who work every day to move the goods that Union Pacific's customers and the U.S. economy rely on.

The **nine award categories** are tied to the pillars of Union Pacific's Safety, Service, and Operational Excellence strategy: Safety, Service, People, Asset Utilization, Cost Leadership, Growth, and the best-performing Transportation, Mechanical and Engineering teams. A cross-departmental committee selected award recipients from more than 200 employee submissions and used performance-based metrics to identify the best-performing Operating teams. With the winning groups ranging in size from 10 to 1,100 employees, leaders selected representatives to attend the in-person recognition event and accept a trophy created from a slice of authentic Union Pacific rail.

Winning teams will hold local celebration events to acknowledge all employees who contributed to their award win, showing off the trophy and thanking them with a special CEO Excellence Award coin and pin.

“These 11-pound trophies aren’t easy to hold because our work isn’t easy to do,” Vena told the audience of 160-plus honorees, guests and executive hosts. “It’s my honor to celebrate you and the people in your lives who made your success – and Union Pacific’s success – possible.”

Please help Union Pacific congratulate its first-ever CEO Excellence Award recipients. Learn more about their efforts in these nomination form excerpts.

## 2024 CEO Excellence Award Recipients

### **Spirit of Union Pacific Award: Big Boy Steam Tour Team**

“This team leveraged Union Pacific’s unique assets to showcase our rich history and value in a way that engaged the public and our employees. Together, the Westward Bound and Heartland of America tours spanned 84 days, drew crowds of over 500,000, interacted with more than 11 million social media users, attracted 11,000 new Steam Club members, and generated nearly 600 media stories reaching 2 billion people.”



From left: Austin Barker, manager-Heritage Fleet; Ed Dickens, manager-Heritage Operations; Jim Vena, CEO;

Beth Whited, president; Robynn Tysver, manager-Media Relations; Jimmy Thompson, lead boilermaker/blacksmith; Kirt Clark, engineer.

## Grain Traffic on K&O and Colorado Pacific



Colorado Pacific RR loaded a unit grain train at Stockton, CO, on the former Missouri Pacific RR Towner Line on March 17, 2025. One car featured the MP's 'Screaming Eagle' logo! Missouri Pacific 724239 was the last car loaded at the Weskan Grain elevator, the newest automated grain elevator in southeastern Colorado. ©2025 Chip



Colorado Pacific CXR 620 and 916, SD70MAC from BNSF, loaded a unit grain train at the Weskan Grain elevator at Stockton, east of Sheridan Lake, CO, March 19, 2025. This had been the Missouri Pacific's Towner Line. © 2025 Chip



Kansas & Oklahoma (K&O) had two trains loading grain on the western end of their sprawling system March 17, 2025. One loaded at Horace, Kansas, using WAMX 3936, a GP39-2. Train passed the abandoned Missouri Pacific depot at Horace. This depot and yard were once a busy MP crew change division point. The MP's Colorado Eagle was serviced here back in the 1940's-1960's. ©2025 Chip

[Learn More](#)

## Rocky Mountaineer at Denver Union Station



Rocky Mountaineer train did a familiarization trip from Union Pacific's 36th Street Yard in Denver to the RTD-operated Denver Union Station on March 20, 2025. Rocky Mountaineer will be re-branding its Colorado to Utah operation as the Canyon Spirit. © 2025 Chip



Breaking news is that the Rocky Mountaineer is now using Denver Union Station to load the 2025 passenger season. They also did a test run to Salt Lake City, Utah, which they plan to run starting in 2026 as the "Canyon Spirit". Shown

here, the Rocky Mountaineer climbed Soldier Summit en route to Salt Lake City on 28 March 2025. ©2025 Chip

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Club member Sam Kunugi is part of the volunteer crew that worked on the recent refurbishment of the Denver & Salt Lake telephone booth at the Colorado RR Museum in Golden. © 2025 Dave Schaaf

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## **James W. Gwyn - Letters from 1920's - 1930's**

August 31, 1927 - Denver

I shall be through Palmer Lake on September 1 (1927) on the 1506. We shall probably ride the coaches from Denver to Pueblo and Malta to Glenwood. Dad wants to ride the observation from Pueblo, so that he may inspect some work being done on the track from Pueblo to Malta (line changes, etc.).

January 1932

In the railroad business, I have seen little except I saw a fast K-2 Pennsylvania Pacific working as helper on a drag freight.



The New York Central must be given credit - or rather a kick - for having the first outfit car that I have ever seen with a steel underframe. A mail car has just been painted red and re-numbered x4596.

By the way, I have been compiling a list of the different Pullmans that I have slept on and find the number 66, excluding three or four of which you have a possible record in your files.

Jim received a degree in engineering from Ohio State University in 1933, worked for the Bureau of Reclamation on Boulder Dam (Nevada) and took a job with the Rio Grande about 1938, the year the Railroad Club was founded.

Jim retired from the MoPac in 1975. He died at the age of 90 on January 16, 2000 at Crystal City, Missouri (near St. Louis). (Chasing Railroad History - Correspondence of Five Charter Members of The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club by Daniel W. Edwards published 2020)

[Learn More](#)

We would like to see you at the April 8 meeting of the Rocky Mountain RR Club. It is the last scheduled in-person meeting at the hall that we have used for decades.



## **Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Information**

**Roving reporter -- Chip  
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**With editing assistance from Dave Schaaf.**

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[Learn More](#)

## Transportation Technology Center

ENSCO is proud to support the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Transportation Technology Center (TTC) as the prime contractor conducting research, engineering, testing, and training as well as operating and maintaining this important US Department of Transportation facility.



## Intermountain Chapter

Click on the above INTERMOUNTAIN CHAPTER NRHS link to go to their website.



## Colorado Railroad Museum

Click on the above COLORADO RAILROAD  
MUSEUM link to go to their website.

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