



# RAIL REPORT

April 2015

No. 657

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club • Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

## The Suncor Odyssey Project

Presented by Rich Nilan

April 14th, 2015 • 7:30 PM

The Suncor Odyssey Project DVD focuses on the shipment of a 628 Ton, 115 foot high, 14 foot diameter reactor vessel for Suncor's Denver Refinery in spring of 2006. The DVD follows the transport of the vessel from Italy to Denver. The vessel was connected to a tension skid which fits within a 36 axle Westinghouse Schnabel Car. The movement by train shows the special and dedicated train loading in Houston, transport through Colorado and unloading at the Denver Refinery. The train maxed out at 15 MPH and was set on a siding at night, traveling only during the day. This reactor unit can be viewed from Brighton Blvd and/or from the CZ. In fact, the Schnabel car had to get off the mainline so as not to interfere with the CZ east of town.

Please join us for an enjoyable, educational evening at Christ Episcopal Church at 2950 South University Boulevard, University at Bates, where there is plenty of off street parking at the rear of the complex. Enter into Barnes Hall, where we hold the monthly meetings, on the mid-south side doors. Please bring a guest. **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.**

### RMRRC 2015 Calendar

May 12th Meeting and Program, "Creating the Silverton Railroad Historical Park."

June 9th Meeting and DVD, "Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee" introduced by Wally Weart.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, programs and dates are subject to change without notice.

Please contact Dave Schaaf with program ideas at ds5280@comcast.net or 303 988-3456.

## The Suncor Odyssey Project



The 115 foot high, 14 foot in diameter reactor vessel for the new Gas-Oil Hydrodesulfurization Unit at Suncor's Denver Refinery. The reactor vessel weighs 628 Tons and was fabricated by Belleli near Venice, Italy. The vessel was connected to a tension skid which fits within a 36 axle Westinghouse Schnabel Car shown here at Trinidad, Colorado on April 9, 2005. – Photo © 2005 Nathan Holmes.



The Suncor reactor vessel train at Pueblo, Colorado, on April 14, 2005.  
– Photo © 2005 Nathan Holmes.

For Rail Report 657, the masthead features Chicago & Northwestern #657.  
– Photo from the Tom Klinger collection.

## Notes From The President



The Rocky Club had a second tour of the RTD commuter rail facility on February 27, 2015. After more changes take place at this shop, we might do another visit. There are no firm plans right now. – Photo © 2015 Dave SchAAF.

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## Notes From The President

By Nathan Holmes

Don't forget – our 2015 mini-grant program deadline is the end of April. We've received a number of excellent proposals so far, but there's always room for more. If you know of a rail-related project that's in need of a few dollars, please tell them about this opportunity. The details are on the Club's website – please check it out, and make sure all proposals are received by the end of April. The submission form is very easy to fill out and should take only a minimal amount of time. I'd like to have as many applicants as we can find, so that our top five for our first go at grants really are top notch projects that can benefit. Railroad pres-

ervation groups are always needing more funds, and this is our chance to remold the Foundation into taking a more active role in the preservation community. There's still time to spread the word, so help us out.

My second reminder of the month is that the Club's informal Memorial Day Raton Pass trip is only about six weeks away. Amtrak's agreement to operate via the historic route expires at the end of this year, and the chances of finding the \$10 million per year that BNSF is asking to maintain the route look rather slim. The 2015 New Mexico legislative session

## Notes From The President

has ended without New Mexico considering any funding for their portion of the route. The news from Colorado is a bit more positive, with a bill for \$8.91 Million in appropriations for the next fiscal year, but the bill – SB15-176 – has just passed out of committee and hasn't been to a full vote yet in either house.

As I mentioned last month, the board decided that organizing a formal trip where we coordinate everything was infeasible from a cost and logistics perspective. So, we're doing this as an informal trip. That means everyone is responsible for their own tickets, lodging, transportation to/from the originating station, etc., but we'll all be on the same trains and can enjoy socializing with our fellow fans and club members. Bring your friends and family along, and feel free to tell other rail enthusiasts who aren't members of the club. I hope to see many familiar faces on #3 that Saturday, as we all enjoy at least two more rides over this historic line together.

The plan is take advantage of the long weekend to ride Amtrak down to Albuquerque on Saturday, May 23, and return on Monday, May 25. Tickets are still roughly \$49 each direction from La Junta, so there's still lots of affordable seats. However, remember that Amtrak does demand pricing, so the closer we get to the date, the higher the price will get. Buy early to save yourself some money. You'll also need lodging. There are a few hotels within 4-5 blocks of the station, or several of the hotels further out will run their shuttle down to the station if you call them. Be sure to ask if that's an option when making reservations. There

are also taxis and city buses if you want to go somewhere beyond walking distance.

Sunday is a day on your own, and there's plenty to do. There's Old Town in Albuquerque to explore, or if you feel like getting out of town, you can ride RailRunner commuter trains up to historic Santa Fe or down to Belen. Just remember if you do venture out on RailRunner, they only operate an abbreviated schedule on weekends, and they shut down completely on Memorial Day.

Several of you have also suggested trying to visit the folks rebuilding Santa Fe 2926 while we're down there. We've been in contact with them, but they're in the home stretch and extremely busy trying to finish things. At least in initial discussions, they aren't sure if they can accommodate a group tour on Sunday. I'll continue talking to them, but as of now it might not happen.

Please let me know if you're planning to go. I think it would be a fun social event for all of us to meet up for dinner on Friday or Saturday, but I'll need everyone's contact information to let you know. We'll need to let any restaurant know well in advance. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

I'm always available to answer questions, talk about ideas, or address concerns from club members. You can reach me through my personal email at [me@ndholmes.com](mailto:me@ndholmes.com), or by phone at 719-235-1286. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

## Current Railroad Happenings



Minnesota Zephyr units were shipped by Union Pacific from Stillwater, Minnesota, to new owner Iowa Pacific at Alamosa, Colorado. They are No. 787, shown here, built in 1953 as Spokane, Portland & Seattle 804, later Burlington Northern 9756 and BN 716, Minnesota Zephyr 788, ex-Chicago & Northern Western 4082A, ex-CNW 410, built in 1949. The units were last used in 2008. ITTX 931300 flatcar with 787 was at UP's North Yard, Denver, on March 18, 2015. The units were held in Denver awaiting BNSF high/wide clearance approval. Both F-units moved south via the Joint Line on March 28, 2015, to Pueblo, Colorado.

– Photo © 2015 by Chip.



A BNSF local moving east from Golden, Colorado, passed the western-most station for the new RTD Gold Line, near Ward Road, on March 9, 2015. During this construction phase, BNSF is using the commuter rail track while their own rail will be re-laid at the left (south) side. – Photo © 2015 Dave Schaaf.

## Current Railroad Happenings



The Amtrak special train being washed and serviced at Union Station on March 13, 2015. – Photo © 2015 Joe McMillan.



The Amtrak special train from Denver to Winter Park, Colorado, at 66th Avenue in Arvada, Colorado, Sunday afternoon, March 15, 2015. – Photo © 2015 Joe McMillan.

## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast



Amtrak 42, the “Salutes Our Veterans” P42DC, and Amtrak 187 handled a sold out 75th Anniversary Winter Park Ski Resort Express train on March 15, 2015. The train ran with green signals over Union Pacific’s Moffat Tunnel line, here caught in Coal Creek Canyon west of Arvada, Colorado. Amtrak, Winter Park Ski Resort, ColoRail and Union Pacific worked together to pull off the March 14 & 15, 2015 passenger special trips. Discussions will be held to include Colorado Department of Transportation to offer future Denver to Winter Park Ski Resort trains.

– Photo © 2015 by Chip.

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## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast

By Dave Schaaf

On the weekend of March 14-15, Amtrak ran special trains from Denver to Winter Park, Colorado. This was to test the market for possibly running more trains next winter to cater to the ski and snowboard fans. Both trains sold out in a short time, even with a price of \$75 for a round-trip ticket. Making this train happen took a lot of encouragement from local Amtrak conductor Brad Swartzwelter, along with Bob Brewster and the Colorado Rail Passenger Assn.

U.P. Senior Manager for Heritage Operations Ed Dickens Jr. spoke at a recent train show in Denver. He says it is likely that #844 will be back in steam in 2016. While getting other work, the engine will also receive a 1472-day inspection. The Cheyenne shop is still aiming to have the Big Boy running in 2019. Challenger #3985 has not been parked permanently, but the other engines have priority right now.

## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast



Amtrak 42 and Amtrak 187 in front of the Amtrak special train at Winter Park, Colorado, on Sunday, March 14, 2015.

– Photo 2015 Jim Yust.

Phillip Washington will soon leave his post as general manager of Denver's Regional Transportation District to become the new chief executive of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. On April 9, RTD plans a short parade and rally near Union Station as part of "Stand Up for Transportation Day" to create awareness and support for long-term, sustainable transportation funding for roads, bridges, public transit and more.

The Colorado Springs city council has approved the moving of D&RGW engine #168 to the C&TS for eventual restoration. It has been on display near the depot since 1938.

The shops at Strasburg, Pennsylvania, have been working on restoring RGS engine #20. They are now close to having enough done on the loco that work can be finished at the CRRM in Golden. Estimates are that it needs about \$80,000 more to get it to that point. The

Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation will match funds raised over the next six months up to \$40,000 as a way to speed up the project. This drive started on March 15, and there has already been over \$11,000 pledged locally. If you feel inclined to donate to the Colorado RR Museum for the #20 fund, please let them know that you are a Rocky Club member.

Chama Steam will run a two-day photo charter on the C&TS with Rio Grande #463 in August. Information is online at [chamasteam.com](http://chamasteam.com)

Club member Jim Allamian is on the Board of the Castle Rock Historical Society and Museum. The Museum is housed in a 1875 depot constructed of the Rhyolite building stone native to the area around Castle Rock and designed in the style of the period with wide eaves supported by drop-pendant brackets. The Depot was moved from trackside in 1970, and was carefully restored in 1996

## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast



This blue leased unit 6004 was getting ready to bring a local back west to Golden, Colorado on March 9, 2015. At this spot, the BNSF line cuts through the Mt. Olivet cemetery. – Photo © 2015 Dave Schaaf.

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for use as a local history museum. They have an old RR shed and other railroad-related items that need restoration and are looking for qualified folks that can do some of the work and give estimates so that they can apply for grants. Any recommendations would be appreciated.

The Intermountain NRHS chapter is working on a bus trip to Cheyenne Depot Days and more in May. All local railfans are welcome to buy a ticket on their excursion.

The Boulder Valley Railway Historical Society in Boulder Colorado is ending its run and seeking new homes for its equipment collection. The end of this year appears to be the deadline. As a disclaimer, I am not associated with the group nor am I speaking officially for it, just want to help spread the word in the hopes that some or all of the collection

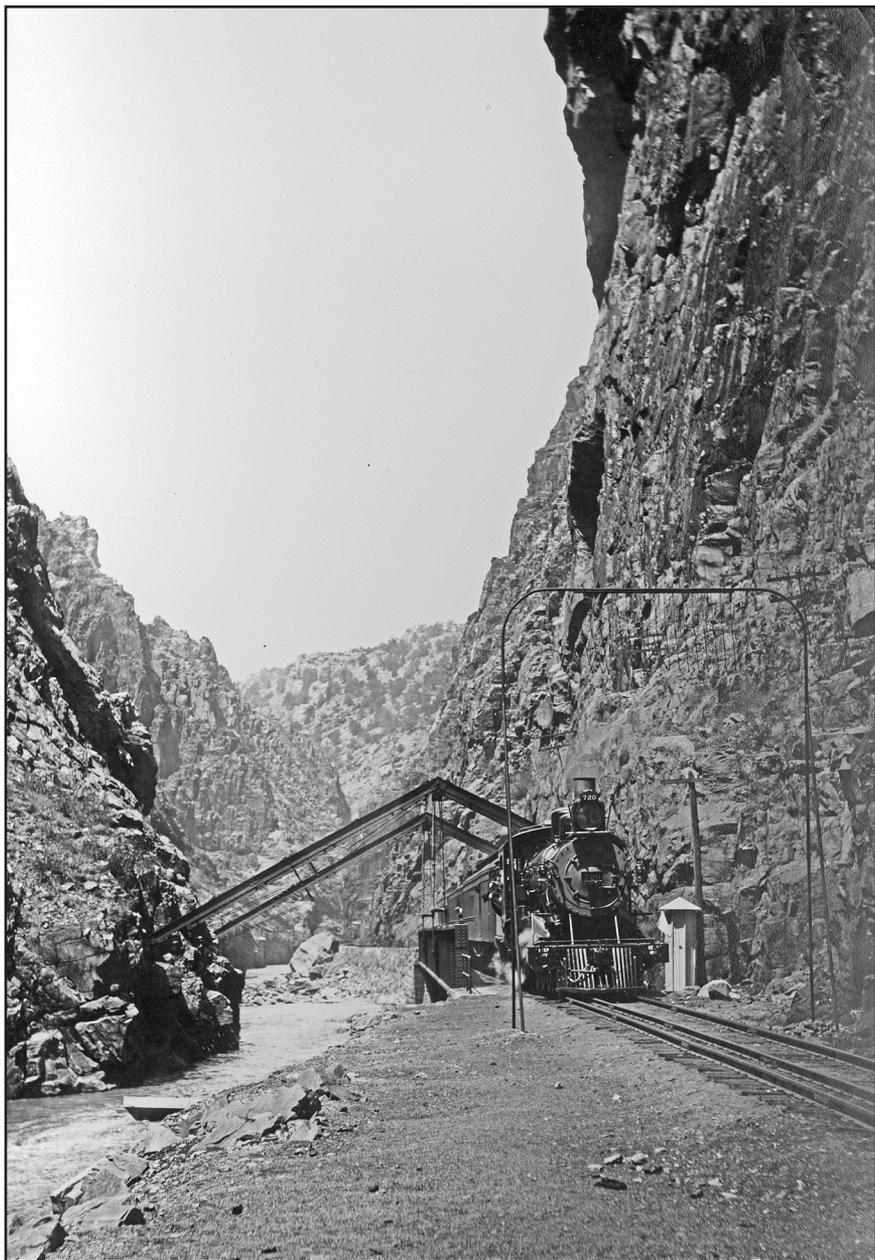
will be saved.

Here is a list of what is there:

- Great Western / Union Pacific 296, EMD GP9 locomotive. Complete, has not run since 2000.
- Public Service Company of Colorado 14, GE 80 Ton centercab diesel. Complete and operational.
- Colorado & Southern 543, 1906 Pullman coach. Wood body, steel underframe.
- Burlington Northern 12300, wide vision caboose.
- Public Service Co. of Colo. No.1, air dump car.
- Colorado & Southern 1771, 40' steel boxcar.
- Colorado & Southern wood boxcar, steel ends and center sill. Number unknown.
- Union Pacific 908372, track panel car / drop bottom gondola.
- Denver & Rio Grande Western AX 3219, track panel flatcar.
- Two car bodies: C&S 13121, wood boxcar and Union Pacific / OSL CA-1 caboose #317?

If you have internet access, look for updates and color photos on the Club website and Facebook page. Members may contact me by e-mail at [ds5280@comcast.net](mailto:ds5280@comcast.net) or by phone at 303-988-3456.

## Railroad History



The Rio Grande Theodore Roosevelt Special with 3-cars eastbound in the Royal Gorge about 1905. This vintage view was taken about four years ahead of the flood. – George L. Beam photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

# Railroad History—Train in Race With Cloud Burst in the Royal Gorge

From *The Sterling Democrat* - Thursday, August 26, 1909

Research By Jim Ehernberger

Hundreds of passengers on the Rio Grande Train No 4 narrowly escaped death Saturday night when a flood as large as that of last week swept down the Arkansas River. A scant ten minutes ahead of the rushing water as they tore down the canon, the train managed to emerge from the Royal Gorge just before the angry waters swept out hundreds of feet of the track and inundated miles of the right of way.

It was a thrilling ride through the canon ahead of the flood, which

came sweeping down the river from a cloud burst at Parkdale, and heavy rains between Parkdale and Salida. The train crew knew of the danger, and they strained every effort within safety to bring the train out of the gorge.

Trainmen describe the rushing of the water down the river and say that to their ears it was the sound of doom but the train kept ahead of the rushing waters and got through in safety.

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## Railroad Dining Car China at The Arizona Railway Museum

By Richard Luckin



The Arizona Railway Museum in Chandler, Arizona, has a wonderful collection of railroad dining car china. The Union Pacific diner CITY OF CHANDLER (interior at left) at the museum operated on the Union Pacific Railroad from 1949 to 1971. The car saw service on the Alaska Railroad and was purchased by the museum in 2005.



Four UP china patterns, from left, Desert Rose, Winged Streamliner, Challenger and Harriman Blue (flat on the table).



The Union Pacific's Challenger pattern for the railroad's all-coach train.  
– Three photo © 2014 Richard Luckin.

# Events of Denver Streetcar History: Street Railway War

From the *Denver Republican*, March 26, 1891

Research By Dan Edwards

Two years ago today [Jan. 1, 1889] rapid transit lines made their first appearance in the city. Today a little over 100 miles of electric, cable and motor lines are in operation, employing 1,050 men daily and representing an outlay in construction of \$7,500,000. These lines are composed of two distinct cable systems, two steam motor and five electric systems. The cable single trackage is 42 miles; the motor 6 and the electric lines 49.

Electric cars are now favored by the public, and most of the horse car lines of the Denver City Railway Company are to be converted into electric roads. The Denver Tramway Company, having purchased the Berkeley motor railway, will proceed to equip it with electrical apparatus. All of the new lines being built are electric.

The Denver City Cable Company has 12 miles of double track cable roads. The company has made no extensions of cable lines during the past year. The present lines are divided into three divisions, viz: The Larimer Street line which extends from Fortieth Street on Larimer to the Platte River and on West Colfax to Sloan's lake. The important sections of the city it reaches are the Union Pacific railway shops, the Grant Smelter, the business portion of Denver, and Sloan's Lake. The second division is the Welton Street line, which extends from

Goss Street, North Denver, via the Union Depot and Sixteenth Street, to Welton, Thirtieth, Gaylord and Thirty-eighth Street.

A comical and at times exciting contest for supremacy between the City Cable Company, the Denver Suburban Railway Company, and the Tramway Company occurred at the corner of Fifteenth and Champa yesterday. It lasted all day and drew a crowd of 8,000 people. It was a contest for the crossing over the tracks of the Tramway Company at that point by the City Cable and Suburban Company.

On one side was arranged a gang of 150 men of the Suburban Company; on the other over 200 men in the interest of the City Cable Company. The Tramway Company also had a gang there to protect their own property. For a time it seemed as if a general riot would ensue. The employees of each company were desperately determined to win whatever advantage there was to be gained for their employers, and it would have required only a word from their superior officers to precipitate a melee. Fortunately, the men in charge of the work possessed cool heads.

It was not an unusual sight, however, to see three or four men sprawling in the mud. The men had no time to attend to any of the fallen. When the men did rise, they "went

## Events of Denver Streetcar History: Street Railway War

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at it” with renewed activity. Fifteenth street from Curtis to Stout was packed with a jostling, pushing mass of humanity, all struggling to get as near the scene of action as possible. Champa street also had a crowd. Blue coats and brass buttons could be seen everywhere. Anticipating trouble, Chief Farley detailed sixteen men to quell any hostile demonstration.

The cause of the trouble was the issuance of two permits by the city engineer, one to the Suburban and one to the City Cable Company to construct a railway crossing on Champa street across the Tramway tracks. It was also a continuation of a fight between the City Cable and the Suburban Company. Three weeks ago the latter tore up the tracks of the former there.

The Denver Suburban Railway Company has a franchise to build an electric road on Champa street. They possess the right to tear up the tracks of any company along that thoroughfare over which cars are not actually run. The City Cable Company has a blanket franchise with the right to build their tracks on any street in the city for a period of 35 years.

The City Cable Company does not wish the Suburban Company to come into the city. This feeling is shared by the Tramway Company. Some time ago the City Cable Company laid their tracks across those of the Tramway Company at the corner of Fifteenth and Champa.

The Suburban Company is exceedingly desirous of coming into the city on Champa street, and one night they put a force of men to work and tore up the tracks of the City Cable Company. In tearing up the tracks the Suburban men broke one of the rails of the Tramway Company. The next night a squad of men was stationed at the corner to prevent the City Cable Company from tearing up the [Suburban’s] tracks. Shortly after the cable stopped that night, a small gang of men repaired to the scene of hostilities for the ostensible purpose of repairing their broken rail. Under this pretense and with the assistance of a few treats [booze?], the watchers allowed the men of the Tramway Company to work.

The men worked all night, and in the morning when the watchers started for their homes, they were astonished to find that their crossing had been taken out. Before a company of [Suburban] workmen was secured to replace the tracks, Col. Randolph of the City Cable Company was notified, and he lost no time in obtaining a temporary injunction against the continuance of work by the Suburban Company. The injunction expired yesterday morning. Late Monday afternoon Col. Randolph appeared in the office of the city engineer and applied for a permit to construct a track on Champa street. Engineer McIntyre granted the permit.

*To be continued next month*

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## Foundation Grant Deadline Is April 30th

Do you know of a railroad preservation or railroad history education project that needs a few dollars this summer? Tell them about the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation's 2015 Mini-Grant Program, where we'll award five grants of up to \$1000 each for summer projects. Applying is simple and quick. Visit our website at <http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org/foundat.htm> to download the application. Remember, all submissions must be received by the end of April 2015.

## Colorado Railroad Museum

### 2015 Scheduled Special Operation Days

For information call 303-279-4591 or <http://www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org/event-listings>

Dinosaur Express Train – July 18 & 19

Day Out With Thomas –

September 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 & 27

The Great Train Robbery – August 15 & 22

The Polar Express™ Train Ride –

Trick or Treat Train – October 31 & November 1

November & December

### Colorado Rails and Cocktails – An Evening of Colorado History

A series of adult lectures that will take you back to the time when railroads shaped the American West. Relax, enjoy a beverage, and learn!

#### 2015 Series:

April, 17 – Hell on Wheels: Wicked Towns  
Along the Union Pacific Railroad  
June 12 – I've Been Working on the Railroad:  
The Life & Times of a Gandy Dancer  
August 28 – Zephyrettes & Courier Nurses  
October 9 – Railroad Stories: Otto Mears  
November 13 – Railroading in the Rockies

Tickets include a beverage of your choice: beer, wine or soda and snacks. Doors open at 6:00 PM for early enjoyment of attractions.

Admission for events: \$12 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. Advanced Tickets Required, 21 and older only.

Advance ticket purchase is recommended and will be available shortly. Please call 303-279-4591 or visit our Online Depot General Store to order tickets.

### Ride The Rails Saturday

Train rides every Saturday. Catch a ride behind one of the Museum's steam or diesel locomotives in passenger cars from different eras in Colorado railroad history or on the uniquely Colorado Galloping Goose. Rides operate 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Members in good standing, and upon presentation of a current membership card, are entitled to free admission. Members are invited to join the Colorado Railroad Museum (a Museum membership provides certain merchandise discounts), and members may participate in restoration or other maintenance programs as volunteers. Please contact the volunteer coordinator at the CRRM.

## Intermountain Chapter, NRHS Events

For information call 303-883-2435 or see <http://www.cozx.com/nrhs>.

Friday, April 17th, 2015 – ColoRail – Passenger Service in Colorado

Jim Souby will share with us the organization's plans regarding rail service in Colorado.

## **Publishers Statement — Rocky Mountain Rail Report**

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### **Club Information**

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### **Club and Foundation Officers**

President	Nathan Holmes
Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Roger Sherman
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

### **Club and Foundation Directors**

Andy Dell, Don Hulse, Dennis Leonard, Pat Mauro,  
Charles Moffat, Mike Tinetti, Nathan Zachman.

### **Membership Information**

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending the annual dues to the Club address listed above.

Regular membership dues are \$35.00. Overseas regular membership dues are \$45.00.

Contributing membership is \$50.00. Sustaining membership is \$70.00.

Patron membership is \$100.00. Golden membership is \$500.00.

An associate membership for spouses and children is \$25.00 additional.

Members joining after April may send a payment of \$3.00 for each month remaining in the year.

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

### **Board Meetings**

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and location.

### **Newsletter Contributions**

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

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Rocky Mountain Rail Report  
PO Box 620579  
Littleton, CO 80162-0579

E-mail: [selectimag@aol.com](mailto:selectimag@aol.com)

**Items for the May Rail Report should be sent by April 17th.**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN



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