



Semaphore



Minnesota Transportation Museum • Vol. 10 No.8 • August 2023



MTM Photo 2023



**Minnesota Transportation
Museum Corporate Office**

193 Pennsylvania Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55130-4319
651-291-0074

**Osceola & St. Croix Valley
Railway**

PO Box 176
114 Depot Road
Osceola, WI 54020
651-291-0074

**Jackson Street
Roundhouse**

193 Pennsylvania Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55130-4319
651-228-0263
Barb@TrainRide.org

Minnehaha Depot

Minnehaha Depot c/o MTM
193 Pennsylvania Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55130-4319
651-228-0263

Newsletter Editor

Warren Plaisance
warren@trainride.org

Osceola & St Croix Valley Railway
is a division of Minnesota
Transportation Museum.

Visiting information

Wednesday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Admission \$7 to \$11.

Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Admission \$9 to \$15

Saturday activities feature 20 minute train
rides which is included in the admission
fee

On the cover:

**GN 325 is fresh from restoration
work in Iowa. Saturday, July 29th
saw the first public display on the
turntable at JSR. Final details will
soon be added before moving up
to Osceola, Wisconsin.**

Scott's Perspective



It is time to clear your calendars and send out invitations to your friends, family members, co-workers and neighbors. MTM is going into the final stretch of the railway season, with September and October being very busy. We need all hand and "new hands" on deck. Key areas where help in Osceola and Dresser are needed include: car hosts, parking attendants, and people to set up, tear down, and work at the Pumpkin Express festival in Dresser. Not only are these months busy and provide a chunk of MTM revenues, they are also incredibly fun and enjoyable. Please make Osceola an experience to enjoy with those who are close to you. Bring them along and pitch in to make the season a huge success.

I am so pleased that the 325 locomotive is back and looking so fantastic. Thanks to everyone who supported the restoration project and worked to get it completed. It will soon be heading up to Osceola on a special migration. Our GN consist will look pretty amazing.

As your now fully announced 'lame-duck' executive director, I want to say a word about the proposed bylaw changes: They make good sense and I hope you will approve them! Changing the board to include community members will bring individuals to MTM who have the resources and connections to help sustain and grow the

organization to be even better and stronger in the future. It will also allow those dedicated MTM members who now spend so much time on board matters to do what they love most, and to serve on an MTM volunteer management team where their skills and commitment can make an even bigger difference, where they can seek your input, and where the operational decisions belong. You will be receiving a ballot in the mail soon. Please complete it and sent it back right away. If I had a vote, you know what it would be. I hope you all express gratitude to Wayne for being a champion of this effort. You do realize he may be working himself out of a job.

It is time to again say thanks to each of you who volunteer at MTM, on the train in Osceola, and at the Minnehaha Depot. You are the most dedicated cast of characters that I have ever worked with. As I get closer to my retirement date, I can't wait to join you as a volunteer.

Speaking of my retirement, we have posted the executive director job listing here in the Semaphore and it will also be on the Council of Nonprofits job board. If you happen to know of a qualified candidate, please encourage him or her to apply. It is a big job, but the best part of it is working with all of you!

Thank you all for what you do, what you bring, and for who you are!

Scott

Taking action for a better future!



There is no better time to plant a shade tree than today! If we want MTM to be here for generations to come we have to plant the tree now! I can argue if we do nothing we are headed for rough times.

See “One Disaster short of Failure” (Page 8)

The success of MTM is important to all of us and we all want what is best for the organization. Please vote “Yes” to approve the new bylaws.

The ballots will be printed and mailed on 8/7/2023. The envelope you receive will contain the ballot and return envelope. Please check one box of your choice, put it in the return envelope, put a postage stamp on it and mail it asap.

All ballots must be post marked by 8/25/2023 to be counted. The results will be announced at the September board meeting!

Thank you!

Board Chair

Wayne Merchant

See “The President’s Message”

by Arron Issacs Summer 88’ on page 9

MTM Seeks New Executive Director

With the retirement of Scott Hippert just around the corner, MTM has formed a search committee to identify and hire a new executive director. The following is the summarized job listing”

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Minnesota Transportation Museum is seeking a seasoned nonprofit leader to serve as its next executive director. This is the ideal opportunity for an individual to be all-hands-in on making significant advancements to a community institution that runs a museum listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a fully operational passenger railroad. MTM operates the Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul, the Minnehaha Depot in Minneapolis, and the Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway with home-base in Osceola, Wisconsin. It may be the most unique leadership role you have had!

MTM is seeking someone with strong leadership, communications, strategic and interpersonal skills. You will lead a small paid staff and contractors, but a large volunteer staff. Acumen in fundraising and public policy are paramount. Salary is competitively modest, but negotiable as earned revenues grow. Benefits are negotiable. Job satisfaction and sense of accomplishment are almost certain!

Send your resume and a cover letter explaining why you are a good fit for this position by August 16th to director@trainride.org, or mail to ED Search-MTM, 193 Pennsylvania Avenue E., Saint Paul, MN 55130.

Billie's Appreciation Cookout



Billie Rocarek is inviting all Osceola and MTM volunteers to a cookout Sunday August 20th @ 430 pm at the Osceola Depot. Please RSVP for yourself and your guests by email:

billier@trainride.org or by text at 715-501-5169

Thank you for all that you do! You are greatly appreciated!

Billie Rocarek

MTM Depot Manager at Osceola

What a Difference Ice Cream Makes!

Historically this trip has had very few riders, abysmal ridership actually. Every year, there's discussion at schedule time if we even want to do it 'again this year'. This year we put a freezer in the depot at Dresser so when passengers get off during the run-around there, they can get an ice cream bar. It's now billed as the Ice Cream Express to Dresser.



Last week I had to close that trip to online reservations for the first time in my life! For an ice cream bar! The difference in monthly ridership is shown below.

Dresser 2022

May 62

June 115

Jul to mid-month 80

Dresser 2023

May 137

June 204

Jul to mid-month 220

Generally, ridership has been up this year, as has store revenue. A charge option has been added to the store on the train which has proven to be popular. Internet access is still intermittent for inventory, but when it works right, it's wonderful. The train is always a work in progress.



7/26/23 MNTX 325 spotted at Northtown in a very secure location next to the hump tower. James Kuehn photo.

BEFORE



AFTER



Here is a front end comparison of GN 325 from the same vantage.

On the left: October 31, 2018 in the Burlington Northern green, black and white. Note the chopped nose BN logo variation from the slanted stripes normally applied since the 1970 merger. This paint was how MTM received the donated diesel locomotive.

On the right: July 29, 2023 in the “as delivered” Great Northern Railway simplified Omaha Orange and Pullman Green paint scheme. GN 325 arrived at MTM’s Jackson Street Roundhouse at 9:30 pm on Wednesday July 26th.



In transit from Iowa, Here she is at Galesburg, IL.



Arrival at JSR the evening of July 26th.

Please congratulate these crew members on their recent promotions! Thanks to them, and all of you, for your fantastic volunteerism.

Leah Harp - Brakeperson at JSR

Mike Pitzl - Conductor at OSCV

Kevin Foley - Student Engineer at JSR

John Radimecky
MTM Director of Training Department-
Rail Operations,
MTM Director of IT,
& MTM Board Member

Make a Wish Visit to JSR

- Barb Loida

MTM was recently honored to host 3 year Axl and his family from Nebraska for a visit at the Jackson Street Roundhouse for his Make a Wish pick.



A family member said they selected MTM because, “Axl’s is crazy for anything with wheels.” She mentioned that Axl was so enthralled with the police car, garbage truck, ambulance and light rail line passing by their hotel that they had a difficult time getting him to go to dinner the night before. Axl got to see the whole museum. The crew fired up the caboose hop on a Wednesday for him to get a train ride and see the engine. The family said they had a great time.

Thanks to:

- ♦ Frani Lowe and Barb Loida for organizing.
- ♦ Frani for pulling together the gift bag. He carried his toy engine all around the museum.
- ♦ Morten Jorgensen and Barb for running the caboose hop train.
- ♦ Andrew Tighe for being the family’s tour guide.
- ♦ And everyone who made the family feel welcome and their experience enjoyable.

Per the MN Make a Wish website, “Research shows that wishes can give kids the strength to fight against, and even overcome, a critical illness. Our detailed eligibility criteria specify that a child must be diagnosed with a life-threatening medical condition, not necessarily a terminal condition. These conditions might include transplants, cystic fibrosis, genetic conditions, lung disease, cancer, sickle cell disease and many other medically complex illnesses that often do not qualify children for support from other pediatric charities. Wishes are granted to every child referred to us who is deemed medically eligible.”

We made one special little boy’s wish come true.

1 Disaster Short of Failure

- Barb Sheldon

One of our volunteers has been heard to say: We are 1 disaster short of failure. Well, take your pick.

- A. 25 years of deferred maintenance on revenue rolling stock coming due:
 - 1. 1096 – sent to IA for repainting, estimated budget \$45G.
 - a. Got half way thru, now \$106G.
 - b. 8 more cars to go, not to mention 1 or 2 in the pipeline.
 - c. \$1M minimum
 - 2. Cure: throw money at it.
- B. JSR building total \$4+M
 - 1. Roof leaks like a sieve.
 - a. Lower roof pulling away from clerestory wall.
 - b. Brick and masonry repair.
 - c. Rewiring
 - 2. Cure: throw money at it.
- C. Dresser Sub - OSCVR
 - 1. For sale since Canadian National took over Wisconsin Central.
 - 2. Options
 - a. TCW western suburbs: Glencoe, Hutchinson – boring
 - b. Progressive Rail: Farmington, Randolph – boring
 - c. Neither has proximity to the maintenance base here.
 - d. One undeveloped Right-of-way from JSR to SPUD.
 - e. \$1M+ per mile.
 - f. Cure: work with the class 1s and throw money at it.

None of the current board members has the contacts to begin to raise the kind of money we need to throw at any one of these disasters. What if we are offered the remaining buildings of the original Jackson Street Shops on the other side of the bridge, or the Dresser Sub. We need to be in a position to rationally consider this kind of expansion to survive and not immediately reject a proffered option.

A radical change overnight in the structure of the Board would not be expected. It will instead be in transition as we continue to identify what works and what will move us toward sustainability or expansion.

The current board was elected with the understanding that they would work themselves out of a job. Changing the by-laws is the first step in that direction.

B arb S heldon

V ote Y es to adopt the bylaws

Trains magazine photo charter

Sept. 11 - 12

A special photo charter will take place Monday and Tuesday September 11 and 12. Monday will have GN 325 and matched set of passenger cars. Tuesdays line up will have 6234 with freight cars and BN caboose portraying a classic small freight train. 559 with our older rock cars and NP 1102. Trains will be out early morning and late afternoon to catch the “golden hours” when sunlight may be at it’s most photogenic.

Volunteers qualified as engineers and brakemen are encouraged to sign up at crewsched. Crewmembers may appear in the magazine - no promises! MTM members are asked to respect this special paid private charter.



Guest Editorial

Do we really welcome new thoughts and abilities?

Under the heading "**The Care and Feeding of Volunteers**," we would like to share some of the most recent observations with you.

We have seen four clear examples in 1987 of the violation of the basic rule that you must care for your members, especially new ones, or they disappear.

Two of the examples were new tourist railroads who had the benefit of a significant number of talented volunteers who were well trained and motivated. Management did not value the contribution these volunteers made to the cause. Communication was poor to nonexistent, key jobs were always handled by the same people and promotions were not available. After the first blush of hands on operation (about one year), the available volunteers dwindled down to a handful.

Our conclusion is that the leaders of the tourist railroads in question seemed to take the position that the opportunity for hands on operation was all the reward a volunteer requires. Not so, as most of us in the tourist railroad business already know. We would also suggest that new people with new ideas often seem to pose a threat to established leadership.

The other two examples are railfan groups involved in operations of excursions. What we observed here was a variation of the above. Several new members of these groups ventilated their feelings to this writer. The central issue here was that the new people brought a new and different dimension to the groups. Their offers of program materials and ideas for new directions that the group might explore were met with polite indifference. Frustrated, the new members stopped attending and events.

Our conclusion is that these new people upset the comfortable pattern and

practices of the leadership and present a threat to "traditional" leadership. To the new person, "traditional leadership" appears to be closed shop. We also suggest that the new members are vital to continued health of any volunteer organization. The institutional church has known and demonstrated this fact for decades. A healthy church recruits and welcomes new members.

If you hear complaints about how hard it is to find help for a restoration project or write the news letter, look at how your organization practices "**The Care and Feeding of Volunteers**." It might just be that you need to indulge in some organizational introspection.

-Joseph E. Minnich
Editor of Train Line
The Newsletter of the
Tourist Railway Association, Inc.

President's Message

The Game Plan

In my short time as President, I've tried to work on the administrative and organizational problems facing the museum. If the MTM is to survive and prosper, we need a foundation of professionalism and a clear sense of where we're headed. Without it, all the track laying, vehicle restoration, and the other things we like to do will be in vain, because the museum will gradually fall apart.

Consider what we are up against. There is a seemingly perpetual shortage of volunteers and money. Almost all of our railroad equipment is in disrepair and no one has any idea when most of it will be restored. Let's face it, we have gotten too big too fast, and we are all seeing the strain.

How do we get out of this mess? That's where the Game Plan comes in. We have two choices.

Choice #1 is to get rid of a large

chunk of the museum and admit that we're a bunch of amateurs who are in over their heads. No one wants this option but it is the only one that makes sense. If We Don't Get Our Act Together. We must admit we're not a hobby club anymore, we're a large enterprise.

Choice #2 is to professionalize the museum. What does this mean? Let's start with the board. Its current structure worked fine when the museum was small, but now it's inadequate to meet the demands of such a large organization. It means reorganizing the Board to include nothing but at-large elected Directors, who will in turn appoint the division vice-presidents. The board will deal only with large policy issues, and the vice presidents will run their divisions but Will Stay Away From Policy Decisions. If this is done there will be less pressure on everyone, responsibility will be clearer, and the Board will become less political.

There's more to "professionalizing" the museum than just reorganizing the Board. This year we put together a real budget for the first time, with real numbers and real priorities. It's not perfect mind you. Frankly, it's too ambitious. That's Okay - we'll learn our limits if we fail to meet a few goals and then start next year's budget will be more realistic. But it's a start.

As you read this, the board is going through a management planning exercise with the help of member Bob Ball and the Long Range Planning Committee. We are listing all the problems that face the MTM, and we hope to reach agreement on solutions. We are also trying to redo the museum's long range plan. This may seem like a simple or obvious thing to do, but we need it badly. We have to stop putting out brush fires. We have to admit that the brush fires are caused by overreaching, by poor management, and—most regrettably— by personality conflicts.

The personality conflicts are the silliest reason for our troubles. It takes no skill or money to stop bad-mouthing members. If I do anything

this year, I'll get everyone to agree to a "no bad-mouthing" rule. If you have a criticism of a fellow member, keep it to yourself. If you can't keep it to yourself, please leave the organization, because we don't need you. The lesson here is that pulling together is worth more than money.

The Game Plan also includes hiring paid staff to do things we volunteers don't want to do or don't have time for. That will cost money, but if we're serious about continuing the present level of activity, we'll do it.

Ultimately, I would like to see a museum that proceeds with caution towards well thought out goals. It owns only the equipment that it has concrete plans to restore, and the restorations are slow, careful and satisfying. It doesn't commit to run a train until all is ready, so no one gets burned out. It doesn't spend money it doesn't have. Members work together in harmony and respect one another.

Sound impossible? It isn't.

Aaron Isaacs
President

GN 1215 freshly painted and about to be lettered.

She will head into Osceola service later next month. Thanks to everyone who worked to transform her!

Mike Alfveby hand-painting 1215 the traditional way, with brush and mahl.

Mike writes:

I'm happy to do it and contribute my skillset to the Museum. I also am very grateful to Neil Boltik, who mentored me in sign making/hand lettering while working at the MN State Fair. Not a brush stroke or vector point is placed without thinking of you, Bud!

I also would like to make a shout out to Eric

Hopp, Jon Snyder and Jeff Braun whose insights, opinions and research of all things "Great Northern" have been invaluable!

Tim Grube also was caught on camera applying the gold stripes. He said it was a very relaxing project.



Information Technology Update

Your Museum IT group has been busy over the past 12-18 months keeping the computer side of operations running and working on some new projects too. Should you need anything from us, remember you can email us at it@trainride.org and that will reach all of us, John Radimecky, Tom Edwards, Brian Rockholt, Jay Taylor, and Jason Banick. We hope to be adding another name or two to the list soon too. Almost all of us have day jobs so we do what we can to at least maintain the status quo and improve things along the way. Here's some of the projects we have in progress or complete

- **Restoration of all security cameras** - Several had stopped working when the previous IT crew left and all are operational again. The camera servers needed some care and feeding too. (work by Jay, John, Brian)
- **Creation of IT ticket system** - to help keep requests from getting lost or forgotten. We're still working on deploying this but ultimately we want to let office staff and volunteers use a web page to submit requests to IT in a way that helps us prioritize and track progress for each one. (work by Tom)
- **Computer upgrades** - All register computers at Jackson Street and Osceola were upgraded and outperform the old ones by leaps and bounds. We're working on replacing the office computers too, starting with the Executive Director. We know where our bread is buttered. Special thanks to Jay Taylor for the donation of some newer computers for the office. (work by John)
- **Internet upgrades** - Big performance upgrades for about the same cost. First up was the Comcast service at the Roundhouse which was at a service level not even offered by Comcast/Xfinity anymore. For a slight cost increase the speed increased by a factor of about 100! This also greatly helps the two Historical Societies that rent space from us as they deal with very large file transfers. Meanwhile, Osceola had an old DSL line that was really limited and would fail when it rained, not good for business. After trying a few options we settled on T-Mobile for Business Internet that's about 12 times the speed of the old line and a little cheaper too. (work by John)
- **Mariah Cafe register** - We put a computer and credit card terminal on the rolling store, now known as The Mariah Cafe. This enhances our service level to customers because we now can accept credit cards and electronic payments such as smart credit cards, Apple Pay, and Google Pay in addition to cash! Previously we were cash only, which is an inconvenience in our modern, electronic world. The register also allows us to track inventory better which means potentially saving money from losses and having the right amounts of inventory to meet demand. (work by John)
- **Creation of a "wiki" for IT knowledge** - a wiki is like an electronic encyclopedia. After the previous crew left there was no handoff of information about the IT infrastructure or services. Early on, the efforts of the IT group were focused solely on learning what we had and how to gain access to it. That wasted a lot of time that could have been spent improving and securing access. The IT wiki could be a template to be used by other departments around the Museum to store knowledge and data relevant to different areas

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(Continued from page 11)

such as rolling stock and locomotive maintenance, gift shop and inventory procedures, collections, etc. that can help pass along vital information to others. We're still smoothing things out but if you are interested in learning more please contact it@trainride.org as ask about the wiki for your area. (work by Tom)

- **Password management** - We purchased a subscription with Bitwarden password manager to help track all the various passwords and security information that office staff and key volunteers need to track for continuity of business. If you are someone who keeps passwords, access codes, or other security sensitive data relevant to the Museum on paper (or some kind of unencrypted note), we want to help you start using Bitwarden. We'll be having an intro class for the people who need it and if that's you, please contact it@trainride.org and mention that you would like to use Bitwarden password manager for Museum business. (work by Brian, John)
- **Firewall** - Replaced the old firewall at the Roundhouse with a newer, more capable firewall. The firewall was a donation from a friend of John Radimecky's (work by John)
- **Remote/external access to the Roundhouse** - We disabled remote access into the Roundhouse after the previous IT crew left on bad terms. We are now in the process of slowly allowing remote access in a controlled way starting with IT access so we can support our infrastructure even if we are at our paid jobs or away from the Museum. (work by John, Jay)
- **Network Separation** - We're working on splitting the network infrastructure into separate networks for the office/Museum business, guests, cameras, and the Historical Societies. This increases the "security posture," to use the fancy term, so each usage type has a network to itself instead of sharing everything. It's better and won't incur any additional cost. (work by Jason, John)
- **Telephone system** - We're looking into transitioning to a Voice over IP phone system that should save us money on monthly phone service, although there will be some initial capital to get new phones. The existing system works but is quite old and not very flexible. A new system could integrate Jackson Street and Osceola together and no more phantom extensions ringing or lit up constantly. (work by Jay)

Crew Training Department News

The MTM Crew Training Team thanks all the crew members past and present for your volunteerism. You're an important piece of the whole puzzle that provides train rides and rail operations for the Museum. We have some recent promotions to announce

- Kevin Foley is a student engineer at JSR
- Michael Pitzl is a conductor at OSCV
- Leah Harp is a brakeperson/brakeman at JSR

There have been many more promotions in the past and we haven't always done a superb job announcing them, so we're renewing our effort starting with June/July 2023. We want to congratulate all of our talented crew who have received promotions in the past!

(Continued on page 13)

New instructor program for brakemen

We're launching a new mentor training program for brakeman instructors starting in 2024. Interested people should contact crewtraining@trainride.org with a subject of "brakeman instructor" if you...

- You are a qualified brakeman or higher at JSR or OSCV
- Have the desire to help students do well by being a better instructor
- Like to follow rules and procedures
- Want to help students develop good and safe habits

Currently any qualified brakeman is automatically considered a mentor for student brakemen, but there are problems with this approach. For example a brand new brakeman should have a few shifts on their own before mentoring a student, especially a brand new one. Some brakemen may not be comfortable mentoring. Hence, we are launching a brakeman instructor program to help brakemen be better instructors. This should result in a more consistent on-the-job training for students.

It all begins with you sending an email and it won't involve much additional time. **We need a lot of brakeman instructors** so that students can easily sign up and begin their journey as a crew member.



Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway

Passenger Count History



Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Month							
May	1010	0	1880		897	696	803
June	1279	172	1799		2099	2162	2184
July	2098	1766	2067		2961	2893	
August	1415	1675	3077		2507	2893	
September	3599	2968	3597		3434	4619	
October	13390	10812	8663		10949	13094	
Annual Total	22791	17391	21083	0	22847	26357	

Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Railway: "The Dan Patch Line"

Last revised: July 18,
2023

By: Adam Burns



Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern DT-6-6-2000 #23 is seen here in service in Minneapolis on May 20, 1971. Bob Johnson photo.

The Minneapolis, Northfield and Southern Railway was the brainchild of successful livestock feed and mail/order businessman, Colonel Marion Wills Savage.

He envisioned an electrified interurban connecting the Twin Cities and Dubuque, Iowa with through service into Chicago and other Midwestern points.

Like so many traction schemes this one fell far short of its intended goal. What was originally known as the Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester & Dubuque Electric Company only made it about 40 miles out of Minneapolis before funding ran out.

Soon afterwards, Savage and his famous race horse, Dan Patch, passed away. The property subsequently failed and was renamed the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern. New ownership realized its only chance for success was by transitioning into a belt line.

Throughout the 1920's freight continued to grow

and was soon earning more than \$1 million annually. The MN&S went quietly about its business for the next six decades until the merger movement finally brought change.

During the early 1980's it was acquired by the Soo Line as part of that road's attempt to expand across the Midwest. After this endeavor fell through the former MN&S lines were sold to new short line startups.

Today, most of its original network remains in operation under the Twin Cities & Western and Progressive Rail (this company continues sporting the MN&S's historic livery and logo).

In their excellent book, "The Electric Interurban Railways In America," authors and historians Dr. George Hilton and John Due point out how there were three great eras of interurban growth in the United States.

It all began during the 1890's and reached a fever pitch between 1901 and 1904 when more than 5,000 miles were laid down.

The Panic of 1903 briefly ended further expansion but construction reignited between 1905 and 1908 when another 4,000 miles were built. It was during this latter period that Marion Savage dreamed of his own electrified railroad.

In an era just before Henry Ford's revolutionary Model T, the interurban was viewed as the future in transportation with reliable, efficient, and high-speed service between cities of all sizes.

The traction concept faced a daunting task even before the automobile as it tried to compete against the long-established steam railroads.

For some strange reason, many further handicapped themselves by connecting tiny countryside hamlets like Middlebourne, West Virginia and Montrose, Pennsylvania where such little development offered only a marginal chance for success.

In addition, few bothered developing carload

stock farm) opened for regular service on July 5, 1910.

Since the MStPR&DECT was designed for passenger service it needed a direct entry into downtown Minneapolis if it hoped to procure the expected business. This was also a problem since its would-be connection, the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company (TCRT), had no desire to work with the interurban.

To make matters worse, Minneapolis initially refused a franchise (later remedied). In the meantime, the Dan Patch Line continued southward and commenced regular service to Northfield (37 miles) on December 13, 1910.

Another issue was the matter of electrification; Savage had continually promised the road would be energized, even perusing potential sites for a small power plant.

Ultimately, the idea was abandoned and the company settled on gas-electric rail cars manufactured by General Electric. While the MStPR&DECT encountered numerous early setbacks, operations did eventually improve.

An agreement was reached with the TCRT and, following construction of a small depot at 54th Street, through service was inaugurated to that point on March 1, 1911. A year later the Dan Patch discontinued its southern construction efforts entirely when work ceased on an extension to Faribault.

Instead, the road leased Chicago Great Western's Mankato Branch. This line was never particularly profitable but the CGW connection it offered at Northfield/Randolph proved very important as the carload freight business grew.

The "Dan Patch Line"

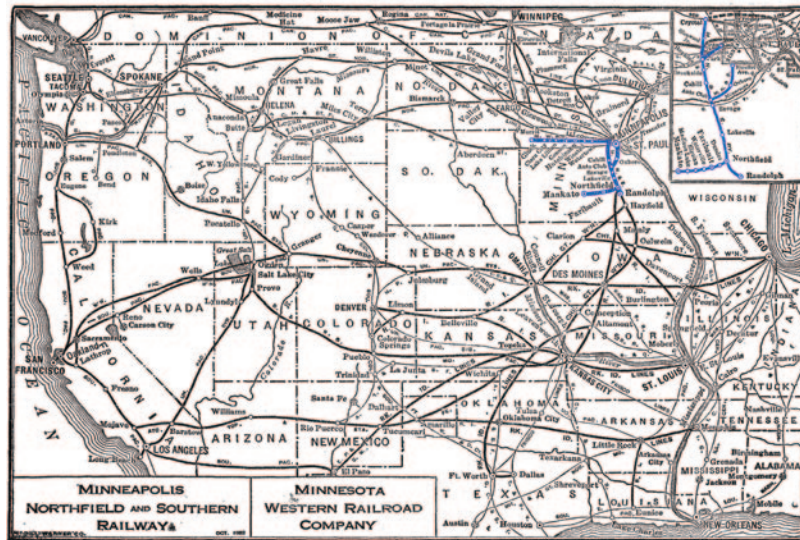
In an effort to increase ticket sales the Dan Patch followed in the footsteps of many other interurbans by building amusement parks and resorts. The most popular was Antlers Park situated along Lake Marion, not far from Savage.

It featured a beach, club house, dancing pavilion, aerial swing, and even a miniature railway all of which drew huge summer crowds. The road's first involvement with freight occurred on August 25, 1911 when it shipped 400 gallons of milk from the Crescent Creamery located in Northfield to Minneapolis.

This was followed a few years later by the purchase of a freight locomotive, delivered in July of 1913. It was the first gas-electric design ever built, a product of General Electric that fea-

tured a boxcab carbody with a massive center headlight.

The machine was about 40 feet in length utilizing a pair of engines producing (combined) 640 horsepower with a top-speed of 38 mph (reports state it was operated as high as 51 mph).



As historian Bill Middleton notes in his article, "The Strange, Successful Story Of The Railroad That Was Once Named For A Race Horse" from the June, 1959 issue of Trains Magazine, the employment of this new locomotive gave the Dan Patch Line claim as the very first railroad or interurban to operate exclusively with internal combustion power.

As the freight business took off, Savage further sought a downtown Minneapolis connection for improved interchange with the major Class I's.

He was finally able to achieve this in 1914 when the Dan Patch Line opened a new terminal at 7th Street North, operated in junction with the 3-mile Electric Short Line Terminal Company (ESL for short, this system was formally merged into the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern in 1956.).

It was all made possible by a connector built from Auto Club Junction (near Savage) to ESL's Luce Line Junction. In addition, a freight terminal was situated nearby (When the MStPR&DECT entered receivership it stopped using this facility, as well as the Chicago Great Western's Mankato Branch for a few years. After the M&NS's startup, service resumed to each.).

Unfortunately, the lack of a strong freight base, coupled with the expensive infrastructure projects, led the MStPR&DECT into receivership on July 20, 1916. This occurred just two weeks after a strange series of events resulted in the passing of both Marion Savage and his fabled race horse, Dan Patch, which died unexpectedly on July 11th.

Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Railway
After hearing the news, his owner passed just a day later. What followed was a brief but dramatic reorganization period when parties, particularly creditors, wanted the railroad liquidated to reclaim monetary losses. This effort was thwarted, in the end, which led to the property's reorganization as the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Railway in June of 1918.

Recognizing the only chance for long-term profitably lay in freight, new ownership wasted no time developing this business. In 1919 such carloads earned \$79,000 while just a year later had jumped to \$116,000. These numbers continued to climb while at the same time passenger service was cutback.

It gained true belt line status when a 6-mile extension opened in 1927 from Soonor, on the western outskirts of Minneapolis, to a connection with the Soo Line at Crystal. This included an additional 7 miles of Soo Line trackage rights to reach Shoreham Yard and an interchange with Northern Pacific's Northtown Yard.

With this half-million dollar project completed the MN&S now had seven interchanges opened with the primary carriers serving the Twin Cities region (Chicago & North Western, Rock Island, Chicago Great Western, Milwaukee Road, and Great Northern along with those previously-mentioned).

There was also an interchange with the Minnesota Western Railway, a small road with its own. It began as the Electric Short Line Railroad (ESLR) incorporated in August of 1908.

By 1927 it had opened just over 115 miles from Minneapolis to rural Gluek, Minnesota with intentions of pushing as far west as Brookings or Watertown, South Dakota (never completed). The lightly patronized ESLR was managed by the MN&S until its 1956 when it was sold to the Minneapolis & St. Louis and later abandoned.



Bachman farmstead workers load produce onto a Dan Patch lineboxcar for delivery to market.

In 1929 the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern grossed over \$1 million in revenue for the first time in its history and continued acquiring new locomotives (including steam) to meet growing demand. The onset of the Great Depression did witness traffic declines although the company withstood this period relatively well.

Some retrenchment took place as the depression settled in, notably dropping its lease of CGW's Mankato Branch on January 18, 1931.

This trackage had originally been built under the Rock Island (as the Wisconsin, Minnesota & Pacific) to extend its reach across the Upper Midwest, and perhaps even reach the Pacific coast, although that idea eventually fizzled.

For awhile it was leased by the Minneapolis & St. Louis as its "Cannon Valley Division" before finally being sold to the CGW in 1899. The stub-end branch never saw much business and was later abandoned. The MN&S continued to thrive during, and after, World War II reaching a net operating revenue of \$4.77 million by 1957.

During the diesel era it maintained an interesting fleet, owning a few Fairbanks-Morse models and even Baldwin's odd DT-6-6-2000 center-cab transfer switcher.

Soo Line Merger

The Midwestern merger movement began with C&NW's acquisition of Minneapolis & St. Louis in 1960, followed by the Chicago Great Western in 1968. As the number of railroads shrank the MN&S realized its future was in doubt since over 70% of its 82,000 carloads in 1957, for instance, came via overhead/through business (inter-change).

It did well until the CGW merger caused its car-loadings with that carrier to drop by half. As marriages (and bankruptcies) continued through the 1980's, Soo Line saw the MN&S as an important Twin Cities gateway to coincide with its larger plan of purchasing the former Rock Island's "Spine Line" between St. Paul and Kansas City. The Soo formally took control on June 2, 1982.

The company and its employees had always taken a great deal of pride in the property with spotless locomotives, well maintained rights-of-way, and very well-kept shops at Glenwood Junction. The Soo quickly razed this facility and removed the connecting yard.

Ironically, the MN&S ultimately became a useless appendage when the "Spine Line" sale fell through after rival C&NW was awarded the corridor in 1985. No longer of any use the property was sold; in April of 1996 Twin Cities & Western took over the northern section above Savage while Progressive Rail purchased the segment south of Lakeville (the Savage - Lakeville section remains owned by Soo parent Canadian Pacific).

There is also talk of turning the route into a commuter rail line given the population growth of towns and suburbs within the greater Twin Cities region. How interesting to think that the entire corridor could come full circle and again carry passengers/commuters just as it did a century ago.



A caboose painted in the former Minneapolis, Northfield and Southern livery. This caboose is now operated by Progressive Rail line photographed in Bloomington, Minnesota.



Tucked away in the backyard of Jackson Street Roundhouse is this flatcar still displaying its original MN&S markings.

Coming Events

6/30/2023

7/1	1330	JSR Mangan b'day	10/26	1100	OSCVR Eagan P&R PIZZA 26
7/5	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
7/8	1030	JSR Schmitt b'day	11/1	1030	JSR Tots n' Trains
7/12	1000	JSR Make-a-wish with ride	11/15	1030	JSR Tots n' Trains
7/15	1030	JSR Crenshaw b'day	11/29		JSR \$5 on the 5th
	1330	JSR Whitehurst b'day			
7/19	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			Santa's Train Shop 12/2 – 12/17/23
7/22	1030	JSR Bohn b'day			
7/26	1230	JSR Stlwtr Advntr Club 40 gr K-1			
8/2	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		8/13 1100 OSCVR A11 grp 20			
8/16	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		8/26 1100 OSCVR A11/1097 grp 60			
8/30		JSR \$5 on the 5th			
9/6	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		9/11-12 OSCVR Trains Magzn photo charter			
		9/16 1530 OSCVR Octoberfest			
9/20	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		9/21 1100 OSCVR Chip Valley Srs 100 Coach			
		IHM church 56 Coach			
		9/23 1530 OSCVR Octoberfest			
		9/28 1100 OSCVR Owatonna PIZZA 56			
		1400 OSCVR Tour grp 56 coach			
10/4	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		10/5 1100 OSCVR MLTours BOX LUNCH 55			
		1100 ACTours BOX LUNCH 56			
10/12	1100	OSCVR MLT FLAR BOX LUNCH 55			
		1100 OSCVR SLP P&R PIZZA 56			
		1100 OSCVR Leisure Tours BOX LUNCH 110			
		1400 OSCVR Valley Tours BOX LUNCH 56			
		10/14 1030 OSCVR grp coach 35			
		1030 GetKnit A11&1097 45			
10/18	1030	JSR Tots 'n Trains			
		10/20 – 10/22 OSCVR Pumpkin Express			