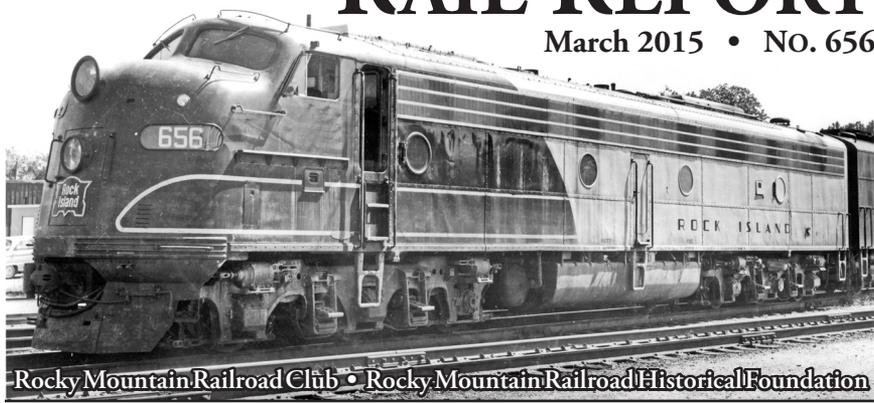


# RAIL REPORT

March 2015 • No. 656



## From the Past to the Future – D&RGW OB Pile Driver

The Reconstruction of historic Pile Driver OB

Presented by John S. Engs

March 10th, 2015 • 7:30 PM

In 1998 The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad undertook the restoration and reconstruction of Pile Driver OB as its first major restoration project in their history as an organization. Today OB is in operating condition and is the only steam powered narrow gauge pile driver still in existence. Join us for a short look at the restoration of OB followed by an operational demonstration video. The restoration of Derrick OP and its return to operation after seven years and the restoration of Tourist Sleeper Car 0252/470 now in process at the Colorado Springs work site will also be discussed.

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.**

### RMRRRC 2015 Calendar

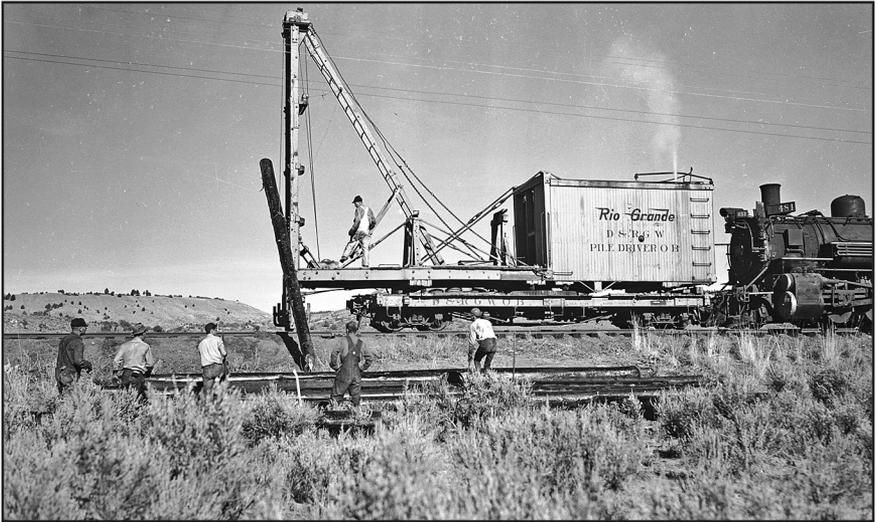
April 14th Meeting and Program, “The Suncor Odyssey Project” presented by Rich Nilan.

May 12th 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.

## From the Past to the Future – D&RGW OB Pile Driver



Pile Driver OB in operation, November 18, 1949, on the D&RGW at Amargo, New Mexico.

– Bob Richardson photo, Denver Public Library, Western Heritage Collection.



Restored Pile Driver OB on a charter with D&RGW 315.

– Photo © Jerry Day.

For Rail Report 656, the masthead features Rock Island #656 at Topeka, Kansas, on August 20, 1963. – Photo from the Tom Klinger collection.



Club members were able to attend the first Club tour of the new Denver Transit Partners / RTD Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility, located just east of Union Pacific's North Yard on January 28, 2015. – Photo © 2015 Nathan Holmes.

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## Notes From The President

### Join Us Over Raton in May

By Nathan Holmes

As most of you are aware, the Southwest Chief's days may be numbered. The existing agreement to operate via the Raton Pass line in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico expires at the end of 2015. Having no other traffic between Trinidad and Lamy (where New Mexico state ownership begins) and only a need for low speed freights on much of the rest of the line across Colorado and Kansas, BNSF has asked Amtrak and the states of New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas to start contributing – to the tune of approximately \$10 million per year to the capital improvements needed on the line to keep it in the condition needed for passenger speeds. So far, the only monies to come forward are a \$12.5M US DOT TIGER grant and \$9.3M in matching funds from Kansas and some of the local governments in southeast Colorado. The states of Colorado and New Mexico have so far come forward with nothing.

With the historic route's impending demise, the idea of the RMRRC taking a trip over the line has come up several times in the last year. After all, we have a long history of planning farewell excursions over soon-to-be-lost routes. Every time we look at it, however, the logistics of having a Club-run trip just don't work out. Many of those past trips have been freight-only by the time they come up for abandonment, whereas Raton is still a public route. Amtrak isn't going to give us a price break, and chartering a private car doesn't make sense financially because the deadhead fees, connection fees, non-revenue miles, etc. would make the trip cost-prohibitive to many of our members. Taking a bus down to catch the train and back is also cost prohibitive, because only a small subset of trip participants would want to use it. Then there's still the hotels, meals, etc. to be planned in as well. The short version

## Notes From The President



The new RTD Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility with Commuter Rail EMU sets on January 28, 2015. The main facility has six indoor tracks, numbered 6-11. The lowest numbered tracks, located to the far left, are for cleaning and daily work. Higher numbered tracks, located to the right, are for heavy repairs and overhauls. – Photo © 2015 Nathan Holmes.

is that a formal trip will be expensive and the compromises won't make anybody happy.

But never fear, we have a plan. Everyone on the board thinks that a farewell trip is a good idea it just can't be done with the club arranging all the details. So we're going to try it as an informal trip. We've kicked this around at several board meetings now, and decided to go forward with it last week. The plan is essentially to do this over Memorial Day weekend, so that we have time to ride down to Albuquerque and back with some down time in between. Everyone who wants to go will purchase a ticket from Amtrak departing from their choice of stations (La Junta or Trinidad for most of us)

to Albuquerque on Saturday, May 23, 2015, and returning on Monday, May 25. The trains usually meet somewhere in the middle of nowhere on Glorieta Pass, so it's impossible to ride the line down and back in the same day.

You'll be responsible for getting to the departure station on your own. If you'd like to carpool down with someone or would be willing to take members who don't want to drive, please mention that. We'll do our best to try to pair folks together so we can accommodate some of our older members who would go, except for the long drive down. I personally would recommend La Junta, as there's ample parking, but Trinidad may be easier for some. However, be advised

## Notes From The President



An opposite view from the photo on the previous page of the new RTD Commuter Rail Maintenance Facility on January 28, 2015. – Photo © 2015 Dave Schaaf.

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that officially, Trinidad doesn't have Amtrak parking.

On Sunday, you're welcome to do your own thing. Many of us will probably want to take some time to ride the New Mexico Rail Runner – the commuter rail system that spans from Belen up to Santa Fe. Sunday runs an abbreviated schedule, however, so be very aware of train times so that you don't get stuck somewhere. We will probably try to do some sort of group dinner on Sunday evening for those interested. For those who want a break from trains, there's the historic Old Town area in Albuquerque to explore, as well as historic downtown Santa Fe (reachable by Rail Runner). Around noon on Monday (if it's on time), we'll load up on the eastbound Chief and be back in Colorado that evening.

Everything is a la carte. Members and anyone else wanting to join in would be responsible for their tickets, their hotels, and their meals. When I checked

Amtrak's website, tickets are still approximately \$61 each way for coach fare (though it's demand-base pricing, so the closer they are to full, the more tickets cost). We're just providing the coordination, and we'll publish some recommendations for places to stay and things to do in April. However, it should be a great social outing, and because you can "have it your way," making it fit everyone's needs and desires should be significantly easier than a full-on organized trip.

I'm hoping this will be a fun and affordable way to make this trip work and be a fun social outing for those interested. If you're thinking about joining us, please let me know by email (preferably) or by phone.

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.



Restored RGS Goose No. 5 operated during Goose Fest at the Colorado Railroad Museum on June 16, 2012. – Photo © 2012 Bruce Nall.

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## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast

By Dave Schaaf

When the Rio Grande Southern Railroad in Colorado was abandoned in 1952, five members of the Dolores Rotary Club bought Galloping Goose #5 for \$250. For over 45 years, the Goose was on display in a town park with very little maintenance. The Galloping Goose Historical Society was formed in 1987 to raise money and restore it. In 1998, #5 began running again at a cost of about \$78,000. It has since made 38 excursions outside of Dolores, carrying 6,000 passengers.

For many years, the GGHS thought that the local Rotary Club owned the Goose, and conducted all its business through them. It later was discovered that the bill of sale from the RGS was made out in the town's name to avoid sales taxes. The Society is seeking official

ownership of the historic rail bus with the stipulation that it will always be based in Dolores, pointing out the organization's dedicated stewardship. The GGHS feels it deserves an ownership transfer because it restored the Goose, built a museum, pays the liability and excursion insurance, complies with railroad regulations, and has trained motormen and experienced mechanics. The town board is pondering the proposal.

When the Colorado Midland closed the Hartsel depot, a local family purchased the safe to use in their store. It recently came to be placed in the Buena Vista DL&G depot.

In Wyoming, Cheyenne Depot Days this year will be on May 16 and 17, and passes are \$10.

## Information For The Railroad Enthusiast



On February 9, 2015, work was continuing on the overhead wires near Smith Road and Airport Boulevard. Testing of commuter cars on this RTD line in Aurora, Colorado, will begin in a few weeks. – Photo © 2015 Dave Schaaf.

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The Grand Canyon Railway runs a few steam specials throughout the year. This year's dates are March 21, April 4, April 25, May 2, June 6, July 4, August 1, September 5 and September 14, the railroad's 114th Anniversary. They use a 1923 Baldwin 2-8-2, the former CB&Q #4960.

The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad's 2015 season is from May 23 to October 18.

Over the years, many railfans have attended the annual Winterail shows. The 37th such event on March 14 of this year will be the last one in Stockton, California. Next year it will be held in Corvallis, Oregon.

The 35th Annual National Narrow Gauge Convention will be in Houston,

Texas, September 2 to 5, 2015.

Short line holding company Iowa Pacific had record carloads and passengers in 2014, earning record revenue. Their U.S. passenger business was up 46% over 2013.

Freight railroads in the U.S. plan about \$29 billion in capital expenditures, and may hire 15,000 people in 2015, as reported by the Association of American Railroads. Estimates are that 20% of these new hires will be military veterans.

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.

## Current Railroad Happenings



A BNSF 7-car train with William B. Strong, BNSF 32, was wye'd and parked without power at BNSF's Denver Diesel Shop, Denver on January 27, 2015 at 6:30 AM. The train came from Sweetgrass, Montana, on January 26, 2015.  
– Photo © 2015 by Chip.



Norfolk Southern 8099, the Southern Railway Heritage unit in green and white with gold lettering and black under frame worked BNSF Denver to Provo, Utah, train on December 13, 2014. – Photo © 2014 by Chip.

## Current Railroad Happenings



BNSF's 4752 crossed the new bridge south of Berthoud, Colorado, on January 29, 2015. BNSF had to replace this Front Range Subdivision bridge due to the historic September 2013 flooding that damaged the previous wood trestle.

– Photo © 2015 by Chip.



UP 4966, SD70M, passed Sweeny Feed Mill at Pueblo, Colorado, on December 15, 2015. The train typically plies the Joint Line at night and arrives in Pueblo around sunrise.– Photo © 2015 by Chip.

## Ambitions for the Como Roundhouse

### Museum for Big things That Move – Status of Current Projects

Assisted by a grant, an archaeological survey of the roundhouse property has been completed, although the report is not finished. The study identified the sites of buildings and outhouses below the railroad tenement and identified many other details of the property. A prehistoric site was identified as well.

The next logical upgrade to the roundhouse is to build a floor. The floor would serve as a catalyst for turning some of

the heavy equipment into exhibits. The original floor was made out of 3 x 12 inch lumber supported by railroad ties. Building with 3x12's at present would prohibitively expensive if they even could be found. The Como roundhouse group decided that the best way to build a floor was to use railroad ties as support for a deck made out of random width two or three-inch lumber. In the meantime they are exploring ways of creating the floor a little bit at a time.

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## More Railroad History



The photo of D&RGW's Prospector train on page 9 of the February 2015 *Rail Report* is on the Reading Company at West Trenton New Jersey, the East end of RDG's New York Branch electrification. The date is probably in August 1940, as the train made a test run from the Budd Hunting Park Plant at that time. Later in the month it made some press runs including Jersey City

(CNJ) to West Trenton before it went to Denver (routed via St. Louis-MoPac-Pueblo). The RDG / CNJ and B&O trains were allowed 85 mph on the line but I don't know how fast the Prospector went. Budd was the most innovative carbuilder but the Prospector was not one its successes. The train was too small for the traffic and it overheated climbing from Denver to East Portal. They did learn about cooling systems from the experience, making the postwar RDC a success.

RDG West Trenton is now the terminus of SEPTA's West Trenton Line, with CSXT running freight beyond, and the line regularly sees SEPTA's new Silverliner V cars. The new Commuter Rail EMU sets for FasTracks (See Page 4) are of similar design by the same builder but with some differences from one property to the other.

*Thanks to Phil Mulligan for the additional historic information.*

# Railroad Dining Car China at The Arizona Railway Museum

By Richard Luckin

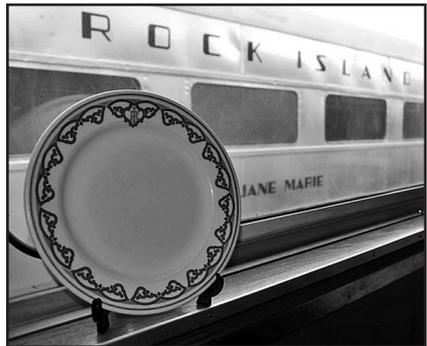
The Arizona Railway Museum in Chandler, Arizona, has a wonderful collection of railroad dining car china. Since we are featuring Rock Island #656 on the masthead photo, historic Rock Island china seemed appropriate.



Three Rock Island dining car china patterns. From left, El Reno, Golden Rocket and LaSalle. – Photo © 2014 Richard Luckin.



The Jane Marie was a Rock Island coach converted to a private rail car several years ago.



Rock Island china pattern LaSalle with the private rail car Jane Marie. – Two photos © 2014 Richard Luckin.

## *In Remembrance* Robert J. Slattery

Robert J. Slattery passed away on August 7, 2014, at the age of 94. Bob was a 64 year member of the club joining in 1951 and at the time of his passing he held seniority number 6. He enjoyed his long membership with the Club and was proud to be part of its history. His library of railroad photographs and slides was donated to the Denver Library - Western Division so that many people will learn and benefit from his vast knowledge of railroading.

## Events of Denver Streetcar History: Rapid Transit Lines

From the *Denver Republican*, January 1, 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.

The third division operates over the same line from North Denver to Court Place and Seventeenth Avenue. It runs the length of Seventeenth Avenue to York Street, where it makes connection with the East Colfax electric, giving a nine-mile ride without change of cars for a 5-cent fare.

The Denver Tramway Company operates three cable lines, none of which has been extended during the year save for a distance of two blocks on South Broadway—from Alameda Avenue to Dakota Street, where a handsome depot has been constructed. The three lines are: The Colfax Avenue line runs from Gallup Avenue, North Denver, to Fifteenth Street and thence on Colfax to a point one block south of City Park. The Broadway line extends from the Dakota Street depot to Larimer and Fifteenth Streets. The Eighteenth Avenue line operates over the Fifteenth Street trackage to Tremont, thence out Eighteenth Avenue, Humboldt and Thirty-second Avenues. Making a loop of several blocks, it returns over the same route.

The greatest street railway activity this year has been the projection of electric lines. The University Park road was completed and set in operation last March. Total mileage of electric roads for 1890, 43; total cost, \$835,000.

One of the handsomest roads of which Denver can boast and which was built entirely in 1890 is the West End

## Events of Denver Streetcar History: Rapid Transit Lines

electric. This is the only broad gauge street railway in Denver. It is five miles in length, extending in a circuitous route from Fairview Avenue, North Denver, via Home, Prospect, Sheridan, and West Colfax Avenues, Elitch's Zoological Gardens, Berkeley and Sloan's Lakes to Delaware Street.

It is difficult to estimate the number of electric lines contemplated in 1891. Already 20 miles are in process of construction including suburban lines. Ten miles of the City Company's horse car lines are to be converted into electric lines. The Tramway Company, having purchased the Berkeley motor and University Park electric lines, will spend nearly \$150,000 in equipping the first with electrical apparatus and extending the second.

The Suburban and Thirteenth Avenue line is in process of construction. The Lakewood & Golden electric is being constructed from near Sloan's Lake through Lakewood to Golden. It will be fitted up with elegantly furnished cars after the fashion of Pullman palace cars, and for 13 miles along the line a row of electric lights will gleam overhead.

Last year two motor lines were in operation in Denver. They were the Montclair and the Berkeley line. The former has ceased to operate; the latter was purchased by the Tramway Company. The Berkeley line connects with the Tramway cable at Gallup Street and extends to Elitch's Garden and Berkeley Lake. The second motor line is the North Capitol Hill road, running from City Park northeast.

## Narrow Gauge Excursion



Chama, New Mexico, on the last day of the last three-day D&RGW narrow gauge excursion between Alamosa and Silverton on May 30, 1966. Obviously there were no safety rules in force at Chama on this day.

– Ed Gerlits photo, James L. Ehernberger collection.

## Foundation Grant Deadline Approaches

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, March 20th, 2015 – Behind the Scenes at Beech Grove

Robert B. Stout will provide an in-depth look at the Amtrak major repair shops.

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

The Rocky Mountain Rail Report (ISSN 1040-9223) is published by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation.

First class postage paid at Denver, Colorado.

Postmaster, send address changes to:

Rocky Mountain Rail Report, PO Box 2391, Denver, CO 80201-2391

### **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 April Rail Report should be sent by March 20th.**

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