



ANNIVERS

March-April, 2026



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Volume 86

Number 2

Newsletter of the
 PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER
 NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 Post Office Box 7302
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Chapter Website: www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

Meeting Notice

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

SEPTA Elkins Park Regional Rail Station, Elkins Central Meeting Venue, 7879 Spring Avenue, Elkins Park, PA 19027. PLEASE USE THE SPRING AVENUE ENTRANCE TO THE "ELKINS CENTRAL" MEETING ROOM. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE TRACKSIDE ENTRANCE. THANK YOU!

Our program on Thursday, April 16, 2026 will feature noted Railroad Author **Beth Anne Keates** with an illustrated program on the **Pennsylvania Railroad**. Keates has recently authored a book covering SEPTA's Regional Rail lines, with a second section covering the streetcars of the City Division. This soft-cover publication contains 128 pages with numerous color photos and sells for \$ 32.99 and it is anticipated she will have copies with her that members may purchase.

It's a publication that E. Steven Barry has reviewed in **Railfan & Railroad** and belongs on your bookshelf. Be on hand on April 16.

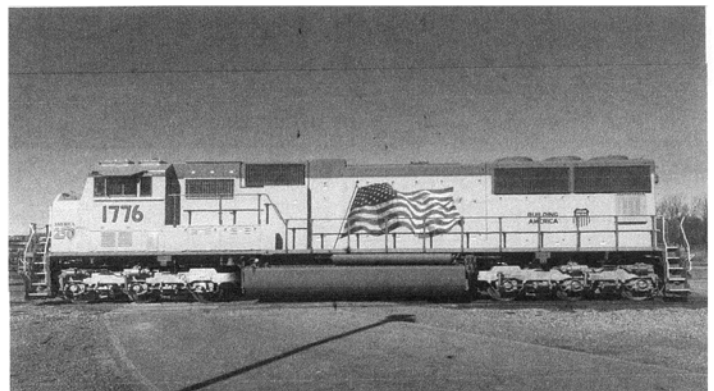
IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

ELKINS CENTRAL IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR OUR MAY 21 MEETING. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 14.

Program will be Larry Eastwood with a PP: Philadelphia, Newtown & Never New York



Union Pacific 4-8-8-4 Big Boy No. 4014 wows the crowd at Jefferson, Texas, in November 2019. The first details of the locomotive's East Coast trip have been released. Jim Wrinn



Union Pacific has unveiled its America 250 locomotive, No. 1776. UP

Notice Annual Meeting/Election

Notice is hereby given of election of Chapter officers for the year 2026-2027, to be held at the Annual Meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, National Railway Historical Society on Thursday evening, April 16, 2026 at SEPTA Elkins Park Regional Rail Station, 7879 Spring Avenue, Elkins Park, PA 19027. The Annual Meeting starts at 7:00 PM, and the election will be held at the beginning of the business meeting.

Any member in good standing who is interested in serving as President, Senior Vice President, Vice President & Treasurer, Secretary or National Representative, may be nominated from the floor at the April 16 meeting. Nominations may also be submitted before April 1, 2026 to Daniel J. Murray, Nominations Chairman, Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, 745 Sunflower Avenue, Langhorne, PA 19047-3747. Dan's E-mail address is WoodyWagon@live.com or by phone to 215-208-7171. Nominations may also be submitted before April 1, 2026 to Marie K. Eastwood, Secretary, Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353 or by E-mail to mkecat@comcast.net.

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT AND/OR CORRECT E-MAIL ADDRESS?

If you are not receiving CINDERS by electronic delivery, we recommend that you consider making this change now. For the fourth time in two years, the Postal Service has increased the one-ounce postage rate and this affects Philadelphia Chapter members who receive CINDERS by U. S. Mail.

The Postal Service snuck another SURPRISE postage increase to everyone, including its own employees on July 21, 2025 when First Class was hiked from 73 cents for the first ounce to 78 cents for the first ounce. There was no advance warning what so ever, either to employees, customers or news media.

More and more Chapter members have changed their monthly delivery of CINDERS to electronic delivery. At present over 100 members have signed up for eCINDERS.

It is more important now that we have on file your CURRENT and CORRECT E-mail address. To that end, we would ask that you E-mail your correct and current E-mail address to mkecat@comcast.net upon receipt of this issue of CINDERS. We need to keep control the cost of mailing CINDERS to both members and, more importantly, to "exchange" newsletter recipients, from whom we have no revenue source.

MARIE K. EASTWOOD, Secretary
March 31, 2026

**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, INC.**
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Founded 1936, incorporated 1973 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation

CHAPTER WEBSITE: For current Chapter information, as well as vintage views of Chapter trips and activities, visit website: www.nrhphiladelphia.org

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2025-26 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: Effective September 1, 2025, \$25.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter dues through December 31, 2026. (NRHS National membership dues for 2026 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS.) NRHS chapters bill their members separately for Chapter dues. Donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends will be mailed during November, 2025 via separate mailing from *Cinders*. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS should forward remittance, payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS** in the amount of \$25.00 to Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Please be sure to include name, valid mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address, as applicable.

ADDRESS CHANGES: Send to Editor Emeritus at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. (Include your **CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER** and **E-MAIL ADDRESS** so our records are complete.) Beginning in early 2023, we effected electronic delivery of *Cinders* to those who elect to receive same.

Cinders is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding *Cinders* should be directed to the Editor at P.O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **EXCHANGE newsletters should be sent to:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353, or by electronic mail to reastwood2@comcast.net.

Important Phone Numbers

Cinders lists below the telephone numbers which should be used to report suspicious sightings, emergencies or other conditions affecting rail operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc.

AMTRAK	800-331-0008
CSX	800-232-0144
CONRAIL Shared Assets	800-272-0911
NJ TRANSIT (NJ only)	800-242-0236
NORFOLK SOUTHERN	800-453-2530
PATCO Transit	856-963-7995
SEPTA	215-580-8111

(Members may wish to photocopy and or clip this notice and keep a copy in your wallet as you are out watching or riding trains. Please send corrections to the Editor.)

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

Below is a listing of the more notable events that have occurred on the SEPTA system since our previous report was published in the January-February issue of *Cinders*.

******Another unwelcome snowstorm struck Philadelphia and its surrounding areas on Sunday, February 22, although it paled in comparison with the massive blizzard that paralyzed the entire region on January 25. This more recent nor'easter dumped nearly a foot of snow on parts of the city and its suburbs (13.7 inches officially measured at the Airport), although many towns in South Jersey saw even more accumulation. SEPTA again activated its Winter Storm Plan, and in general Regional Rail and Metro transit services fared much better than they did in the January emergency.

******By mid-morning on Monday the 23rd things were looking up, subway-el service was operating, with delays, most city and suburban trolley lines had limited service restored, the trolley tunnel was open and bus service was coming back slowly as streets were cleared. But all Regional Rail service continued to be suspended until around 3 PM, when operations on certain lines were resumed using a Saturday schedule. The Trenton and Paoli-Thorndale lines, both of which operate on AMTRAK rails, had service restored before 5 PM using Saturday schedules.

******In February SEPTA named Scott A. Sauer as its new general manager, elevating him from his previous position as interim GM. His three-year contract contains a \$395,000 annual salary. Sauer, 54, has worked for SEPTA for more than 35 years, beginning his career as a trolley operator.

SEPTA's board has awarded a \$211 million contract to Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc. for the design, installation and operation of a new fare payment system to be known as "SEPTA Key 2.0." General Manager Scott Sauer said that a modern fare payment system "is fundamental to SEPTA's success" and that this "state of good repair project is necessary to achieve continued ridership growth." The new system is expected to be more reliable than the current Key fare payments and will include virtual Key Cards.

SEPTA is about to begin one of its biggest-ever construction projects. It will rebuild the 115-year-old ex-

Philadelphia & Western viaduct that carries Route M trains over the Schuylkill River between Bridgeport and Norristown. Estimated cost of the project is \$55 million. (Route M, of course, is SEPTA's new designation for the Norristown High Speed Line that operates out of 69th Street Terminal.) The 3,525-foot viaduct needs heavy structural work, which will require that train service be terminated at Bridgeport station. During the periods when that work is in progress, shuttle buses will operate between Bridgeport and the Norristown terminal. The first outage will be from March 29 through May 9, when buses will be assigned to fill the gap. Several future bridge shutdowns are expected.

The *Inquirer* reported in March that SEPTA has been performing an "odd daily ritual" at the West Philadelphia trolley tunnel portal. This is a follow-up to previous closures of the tunnel due to overhead wire damage in the tunnel caused by defective sliders on the trolley poles (see December *Cinders*). SEPTA now wants to insure that the newly-installed wires and sliders do not cause any more service problems, so when an inbound car arrives at the 40th Street portal it stops while two SEPTA employees unhook the pole, then climb up and inspect the U-shaped brass slider to make sure its carbon wire contact is in good condition. If not it is replaced before the car can proceed into the tunnel.

New Metro rail schedules became effective on February 22/23. One notable change that's part of the transition to the term "Metro" is that all trolley routes are now identified only by their letters (T, D or G) and not numbers. The example given by SEPTA is the former Route 10, its cars now identified only as "T1" destined to 13th Street or to 63rd-Malvern. T2 is the former Route 34, T3 the former Route 13, T4 the former Route 11 and T5 the former Route 36. Suburban trolley routes 101 and 102 are now identified as D1 and D2. The 15 Girard Avenue trolley line is now the Route G. The Market-Frankford subway-el is, not surprisingly, now the "L" and the Broad Street Line is the "B".

SEPTA has announced that its much-anticipated but long- postponed New Bus Network initiative will begin to see the light of day in August. The Annual Service Plan released in mid-March shows the plan—formerly

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known as the Bus Revolution—will begin with a phased approach, as Phase 1 will cover South Philadelphia and Kensington-Juniata. Some duplicative routes will be eliminated while other busier routes will get faster, more frequent service.

The Market-Frankford “L” line was shut down for a time on Wednesday afternoon March 11, due to a transformer fire near City Hall. Shuttle buses were used between the Drexel 30th Street and Spring Garden stationsThe Media and Sharon Hill trolley lines (D1 and D2) are using shuttle buses on all weekends out of 69th Street Terminal.....SEPTA reports that its systemwide ridership for January 2026 increased by 1% over January 2025, and was up by 3% over December 2025. Average daily ridership for January 2026 was 714,475 unlinked trips, with most of the gain from the previous January driven by an increase on buses.

The Philadelphia Parking Authority has equipped 30 trolleys with automatic enforcement cameras using AI technology. These will be used to identify automobiles or trucks illegally parked and blocking SEPTA tracks in the city, which can cause delays to many passengers. Fines of \$51 per violation will be issued beginning April 1.

SEPTA expects to handle many new riders who are traveling in the city during the FIFA World Cup games in June and July. A host of visitors also are expected for other events here during the nation’s 250th (or “semiquincentennial”) anniversary celebration. SEPTA expects to receive about \$5.6 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation to help provide extra service to the FIFA soccer games at the Sports Complex. The city also will host the major league All Star game in JulySEPTA ran special weekend trains for people visiting the Philadelphia Flower Show at the Convention Center February 28 to March 8. The specials ran from-to Lansdale and from-to Paoli-Malvern.

After what many riders—and some local township officials—had sometimes feared might never happen, SEPTA’s shiny-new \$62-million Ardmore station finally opened to the public on Monday, March 23. The old station had been closed for seven years, forcing passengers to use a difficult-to-access temporary station just to the west on the other side of Anderson Avenue. The new station building is on the inbound side and there are high-level platforms on both the east and west sides, with elevator access to both. The project suffered from

very slow construction, the need to build a larger parking lot on the town side of the railroad and a litany of previously unknown problems. Certain AMTRAK Keystone trains also stop at Ardmore station, which is adjacent to the Lower Merion Township office building. The township manager jokingly told the *Inquirer* last year that he wasn’t sure the new station would ever be finished! Originally known as Athensville, the town was renamed Ardmore by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1873.

SEPTA has purchased 24 non-powered passenger cars from Exo, the Montreal transit system, in its ongoing effort to bolster the Regional Rail fleet. These are non-powered cars built by Bombardier in the late 1980’s, and can be modified to operate with SEPTA’s 15 existing ACS-64 electric locomotives. It is part of SEPTA’s short-term plan to address future problems with its aging fleet of Silverliner IV MU cars, which were out of service for an extended period last year and required extensive repairs. Cost of purchasing the Exo cars is \$8.58 million.

AMTRAK and NJ TRANSIT in mid-February warned the train-riding public that there would be inevitable delays in Northeast Corridor service from February 8 to March 15. This was due to the first phase of the cutover to the new Portal North bridge across the Hackensack River in North Jersey, an important part of the multi-billion-dollar Corridor upgrade which eventually will include new tunnels under the Hudson River to Penn Station in New York. The two-track high-level bridge will replace the unreliable 116-year-old Portal swing span just to the south, which now must be opened to accommodate marine traffic while delaying service on the busy NEC. Amtrak says this is the first major bridge cutover project ever on the entire Northeast Corridor from Boston to Washington.

AMTRAK and NJT operations on the Corridor were declared essentially back to normal on Wednesday, February 25, after suffering disruptions following the heavy snow on Sunday the 22nd and into Monday the 23rd. It appears that the storm in North Jersey was really a full-fledged blizzard with heavy winds. Snowfall was officially reported up to 27 inches in some locations, somewhat worse than that experienced in the Philadelphia area (see above). AMTRAK had numerous train delays and cancellations on the Corridor but by Wednesday the 25th operations were generally back to normal, with some delays still posted out of New York.

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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AMTRAK was forced to cancel the *Pennsylvanian* between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh on Sunday, March 8, due to another massive derailment of a NORFOLK SOUTHERN freight train in the mountains just west of Altoona. Two locomotives and 17 empty cars of a westbound NS train derailed just west of Horseshoe Curve, forcing the cancellation of both trains #42 and 43. This was the second time in a month that an NS freight derailment near Horseshoe Curve forced AMTRAK to cancel both of its cross-state trains. On February 6 an eastbound freight derailed east of the Curve blocking the main line for that day and the next.....A 39-year-old AMTRAK maintenance worker was killed on Monday, February 23 when he was struck by eastbound Keystone train #648 in East Lampeter Township near Lancaster. Reportedly he was clearing snow from a switch when he was struck.

AMTRAK's new Airo trainsets have been seen testing on the Harrisburg line in recent weeks, prior to their possible introduction in Northeast Corridor service. A total of 83 of the trainsets are being built by Siemens in Sacramento, CA, at a cost to Amtrak of \$8 billion, and should enter service in the Pacific Northwest this fall. But they also are intended to replace many older trains in the East, including those on the Northeast Corridor. A two-page spread in the March 9 issue of the *New York Times* includes many photos of the trains being assembled at Siemens and details about their construction and interiors. Now the first trains must undergo operational and commissioning testing, while based at Penn Coach Yard in Philadelphia. Expected to debut in revenue service later this year, the stylish and ultra-modern Airos will in the future be used in Regional train service along the Corridor, then on various state-supported services including the Keystone operation to Harrisburg, and on longer routes such as the *Pennsylvanians*. With their dual-mode power system they will be able to move through locations such as Washington, DC without changing locomotives.

The introduction of AMTRAK's new NextGen Acela trains was delayed for more than four years due to planning, design and track issues, according to a report issued in late 2025 by the U.S. Senate. The Federal government had funded the \$2.3-billion program to build cars "to run on tracks not yet built," a reference to the fact that tests have revealed the existing Northeast Corridor infrastructure has proven unable to accommodate the higher speeds of which the new trains are capable, especially on curves. Certain changes in

catenary installation also will be needed. The report stated that Amtrak had lost \$287 million in revenue and unplanned maintenance costs because of the extended use of the older Acela fleet (*High Green*).

Many more of the brand-new NextGen Acela trains could soon be ready for service but likely will sit idle due to delays in upgrading maintenance facilities, according to an *Inquirer* report. Presumably, the problem includes the fact that the new maintenance shop in Philadelphia only began construction in late 2024. AMTRAK's Office of Inspector General reveals that the railroad was late in starting to plan for upgraded shop facilities in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Washington and Seattle. As a result, Amtrak this year will likely be able to operate only the first 24 of the 28 NextGen Acelas and the first 12 of the 83 new Airo trains that will be ready to hit the rails in 2026.....Amtrak would like to replace its aging long-distance car fleet while disposing of 370 Amfleet I coaches, 58 rebuilt Capstone cars, 75 café cars and 11 former Metroliner cab units. It has put out a request for possible interest in purchasing this equipmentAMTRAK again is working on the conversion of old HHP-8 "Hippo" electric locomotives for use as cab cars on the opposite end of bi-directional trains, such as those in Keystone service (*High Green*).

NJ TRANSIT had a double operating challenge this past winter when it was forced to cope with two significant snowstorms. The first, which struck the region on Sunday, January 25, dropped up to 16 inches in some northern sections of the Garden State and ten inches in the south. The following storm—actually a true blizzard due to its high winds-- arrived a month later, on Sunday, February 22. It dropped anywhere from 30 inches in the north to 17 inches in Camden County. The City of Philadelphia recorded an official 14 inches at the airport.

Reacting to the January 25 storm threat, NJT announced that all bus and light rail services would be suspended as of 4 AM on Sunday the 25th and rail commuter service halted by 2 PM. But rail service actually was cut well before that due to the intensity of the storm. The last train from Atlantic City was #4668 leaving there at 9:18 AM on Sunday. By Tuesday morning the 27th all bus and light rail services were restored to regular weekday schedules, and commuter train service also resumed that morning using the reduced Severe Weather Level 2 schedules. An exception on Tuesday was the Atlantic City line which operated on its regular weekday schedule. When the February storm threatened, all bus

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and light rail service was suspended by 6 PM Sunday the 22nd and commuter rail by 9 PM. Most service was restored beginning on Tuesday morning the 24th, using Presidents Day schedules, although trains using the Northeast Corridor had some adjustments to allow for AMTRAK's snow clearing work. The Atlantic City line ran its regular weekday schedule.

Gov. Mikie Sherrill signed an executive order on March 27 instructing NJ TRANSIT management to submit a plan within 45 days on how NJT will improve "rider experience and customer service delivery". The governor acknowledged that the agency has had financial problems but that it needs to act now to address the numerous accessibility, cleanliness, safety and computer issues. A second 45-day period will follow during which NJT will be expected to submit a report on its planned actions.

NJT has painted Bombardier dual-mode ALP45DP locomotive in a new red, white & blue scheme to commemorate this year's 250th anniversary of U.S. independence. Lettering on the sides is "Celebrating America's 250th 1776-2026" (*Trains*)..... NJT has suspended the publication of printed rail timetables for the rest of this year due to the significant number of schedule changes to be made during that period. NJT cited a \$500,000 cost saving as well as environmental benefits from not discarding old timetables. Riders are referred to the NJ Transit website which posts the schedules and are available by using the QR codes installed at former locations of the printed timetablesIn January NJT unveiled its first upgraded trainset on the light rail River Line, featuring a revamped interior and an overhauled diesel engine. It is the first of the 20 Swiss-built articulated trainsets to be rebuilt, units with a spotty operations record since they were acquired in 2004. NJT took over operation of the Camden-Trenton light rail line from subcontractor Alstom in 2025.

UNION PACIFIC has announced that it will send its huge 4-8-8-4 steam locomotive #4014 to Philadelphia for the much-anticipated celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary. The largest operable steam engine in America, the Big Boy will travel under its own power over NORFOLK SOUTHERN lines to Philadelphia, making stops for display in Omaha, Chicago, Buffalo and Scranton. Upon arrival in Philadelphia it will be placed on display at a not yet announced site, but it could be the rail yard in South Philadelphia near the Sports Complex.

On its return trip west the famed locomotive will travel over NS's ex-Pennsy main line, with a special stop in Altoona. UP and NS have filed an application with the Federal Railroad Administration to waive normal cab signal requirements for the run on NS lines, citing the fact that the engine already is equipped with a PTC (positive train control) system (*Trains*).

The application filed by UP and NS for a transcontinental merger was rejected by the Federal Surface Transportation Board in January (see December *Cinders*). The STB said the application did not meet the Board's requirements for completeness such as an estimation of the merger's likely effect on market share. The railroads said that they will file a revised merger application by April 30.

A fire in the NS West Falls yard, reportedly in a CONRAIL trash car, required two visits from the Philadelphia Fire Department. First, on Thursday afternoon February 12 the blaze was put out but flared up again early on Friday morning, requiring another visit from the firefighters. They were forced to stretch hoses across the Falls highway bridge over the Schuylkill River to reach the charred car, with the obvious disruption in automobile traffic.....*Trains Magazine* in an article in its May issue reports that NS now boasts the industry's most modernized locomotive fleet. It has completed its DC to AC power conversion program, well after most other major railroads had settled on AC. Much of the work was completed at NS's ex-CONRAIL shop in Altoona. Nearly 80% of its road fleet is now AC. The backbone of its 1,600-unit active road locomotive roster are the 948 AC44C6M's converted from Dash-9's.

CSX has announced that it will start a \$670-million fleet upgrade by ordering 100 new Evolution Series locomotives from Wabtec. Also included in the program is the modernization of 50 existing locomotives (*High Green*).....A male trespasser was struck and killed by a CSX train in Darby about 11:30 PM on Wednesday, March 25..... Now the long-abandoned 1,450-foot-long, 130-foot-high railroad trestle over the East Brandywine River south of Downingtown is about to be purchased by Chester County. This will eventually allow extension of the existing Chester Valley Trail along the ex-Pennsy Philadelphia & Thorndale branch right-of-way.

If your *Cinders* Arrives in Damaged Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or reastwood2@comcast.net and a replacement copy will be promptly sent to you. The incidence of damage has been virtually eliminated through the use of envelopes for mailing each issue, although there is an additional cost involved.

Remembering Tom Fluck.....by Steve Ferrell

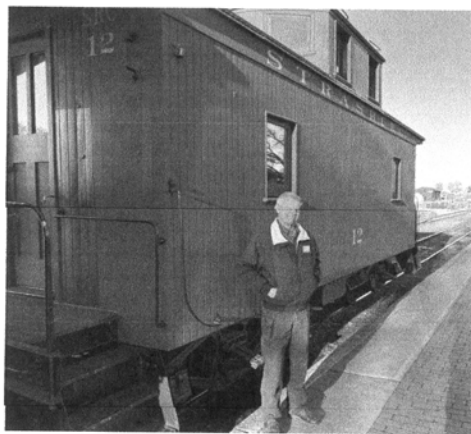
On Wednesday, March 18th, we learned that Chapter Member Tom Fluck passed away at his home in Thorndale, PA. He had been dealing with congestive heart failure for the last four years but he was determined to remain quite active after that diagnosis. Tom was a member of our own Philadelphia Chapter as well as Lancaster Chapter and the NRHS itself. He also held memberships in Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society, Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, the Rough and Tumble Museum as well as the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, Philadelphia Chapter #1. Tom volunteered as a trainman on the West Chester Railroad and hoped to graduate to being a conductor and engineer in the future.

I met Tom when he began volunteering at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania about eight years ago. He was instrumental in welcoming new volunteers and members to the Museum. We also encouraged folks to join NRHS and other groups in which he was involved. At the Museum, Tom was always willing to open equipment for visitors and railfans that was not always available for touring (such as the GG1). Tom enjoyed collecting clocks and watches and had a considerable collection. For many years, Tom and Randy Lennon and his wife enjoyed touring around in Tom's Diesel 10, a 1964 GM Greyhound-style bus that had been converted into a recreational vehicle.

Tom was also one of the main members of this author's rail riding group "Ride with Me Steve". Tom has taken over 50 trips with this group from as far North as Old Saybrook, CT and as far south as Fredericksburg, VA. He has also been instrumental in finding wonderful places to eat at our destinations and novel places to visit.

Fluck was born in 1960 and graduated from Abington (PA) High School. After graduating from Widener University in Chester, PA, he worked in auto repair before settling on a career operating his own business as a real estate appraiser. He also had a good income as the landlord of three attached historic (circa 1840) townhouses to his unit at "Bed Bug Row". When Tom retired from his business, he kept busy for several years owning and operating vending machines.

Tom was funny and charming and by far the most interesting and welcoming person that I have had the pleasure to know. He will be missed by so many people. A celebration of life ceremony and wake afterwards will be held on Friday, May 8th at the West Laurel Hill in Bala-Cynwyd, PA. Rest in peace, good friend!!



Tom at the Strasburg Rail Road



Tom driving the Barrel train at the Rough and Tumble Museum

PATRICK E. PURCELL

March 16, 2026

It is with deep sadness that we inform our members of the passing of Patrick E. Purcell on Monday, March 16, 2026 at the Center for Living and Rehabilitation in Bennington, Vermont at the age of 92. Pat had suffered a broken hip and was in recovery from that fall. Born in New York City on May 4, 1933, Pat was a graduate of St. Francis de Sales in Queens, NY, Bennington (VT) High School and Northeastern University. Following college, Purcell served as a staff sergeant in the U. S. Army Transportation Corps, and was awarded the National Defense, United Nations, Korean and Good Conduct Medals.

He began his professional career in the Traffic Department of the Boston & Maine Railroad, and later worked in the sales department of the Pennsylvania Railroad in various management positions and in 1976 was selected to serve in its Washington, DC unit (USRA) which would drastically reorganize Eastern railroads. That same year he would be commissioned a Kentucky Colonel by the Bluegrass State's governor for his efforts to help commerce in that state.

Pat was a certified member of the American Society of Transportation and Logistics, a licensed practitioner before The Interstate Commerce Commission, and a member of the Delta Nu Alpha Transportation Fraternity. He was also an associate member of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.

Purcell retired in 1994 as Senior Consultant in the Marketing and Sales Department of Conrail where he was affectionately known as the "Great Guru" to the young college graduates who had come to Conrail after the reorganization. His employment would spark an interest in railway history resulting in membership with the National Railway Historical Society and Railway & Locomotive Historical Society for more than 60 years.

A lifelong student of history, Patrick participated in countless tours, conferences and visits to many historical sites in the U.S. and Mexico. He attended 20 consecutive Civil War Round Table Congresses and served as President of the Philadelphia Civil War Round Table. He was also a member of the Board of Governors of the former Civil War Library and Museum in Philadelphia.

An additional passion throughout much of his life was opera, and for many years he held a regular seat for Saturday afternoon performances at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. He also attended performances by other first rate opera companies from Tokyo and Budapest to London and San Francisco.

In Vermont, Purcell was a member of the VFW, American Legion and the Bennington, Pownal, Rutland Railroad and Vermont Historical Societies. He is survived by a number of cousins including John Tremblay (Eileen) of Cheshire, MA and Kathryn Calliert of North Bennington.

There was a private Catholic Committal Service at the Purcell family lot in the Park Lawn Cemetery in Bennington...

RICHARD D. ADAM

January 29, 2026

We sadly note the passing of longtime Philadelphia Chapter Member Richard D. Adam, of Minersville, PA on Wednesday, January 29, 2026, at the age of 74. Richard had been a member of our Chapter for some 45 years, having joined us in 1981. Born in Delaware County, PA, he was a locomotive engineer by trade. In addition to enjoying going to Cass Scenic Railway in West Virginia, he particularly enjoyed growing sunflowers.

He is survived by a son, William and a grandson, Michael Mitchell of Quarryville, PA as well as three siblings, John, Jeffery and Garth Miller, and was preceded in death by two siblings, July Tomlinson and Phil Adam, Jr.

Services were held at the convenience of the family.

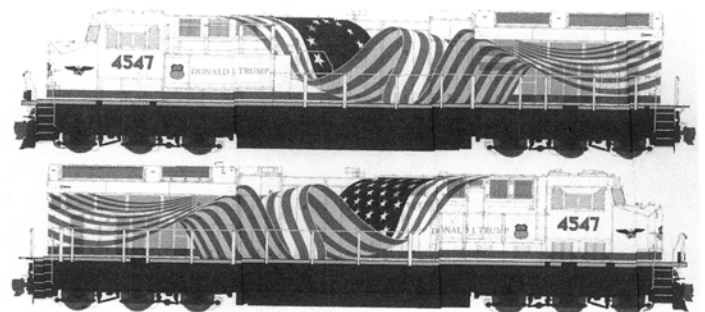
Union Pacific Diesels Wear Commemorative Schemes

As part of Union Pacific's participation in America's 250th celebration, three diesel locomotives will feature commemorative paint schemes as they follow Historic Big Boy 4-8-8-4 #4014 across America this summer.

Big Boy #4014, the World's largest operating steam locomotive, will journey to Philadelphia for Fourth of July, 2026. With stops planned in Omaha, Chicago, Buffalo and Scranton before its arrival in Philadelphia for Independence Day. Following the Quaker City display, additional displays are anticipated in Altoona, PA, St. Louis and Kansas City, MO before the tour concludes on July 29.

UP #1616, painted in a President Abraham Lincoln scheme is already in operation. Union Pacific #4547, built in partnership with locomotive builder Wabtec, will honor our current President, Donald J. Trump. The third unit, #4141 which honors that late President, George H. W. Bush, is on display at the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in College Station, TX.

Looking across the Union Pacific System this summer will be entertaining, or be sure. Thanks, Uncle Pete!!!!



The design for Union Pacific's locomotive honoring Donald J. Trump. UP