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MID-CONTINENT  
RAILWAY  
*Gazette*

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VOL. 24: 3, SEPTEMBER 1991

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# Restoration Spotlight

Dick Gruber

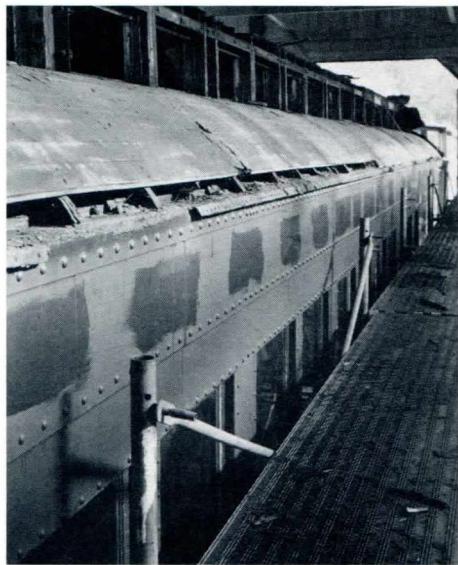
Ex-Chicago & North Western combine No. 7409 is in the new car shop for work including installation of a new roof. The 1915 Pullman-built car was moved into position along side the scaffolding on August 10.

After removing the original metal roof, the wooden deck along the upper clerestory was extracted. As expected, water damage had been extensive. Fourteen new wooden carlines have been installed replacing rotted originals. Work to improved both ends of the upper clerestory has also begun. All of the wooden decking on the upper clerestory will all be replaced with new fir (a total of 1500 linear feet) before a new canvas/neoprene roof is applied. Drip caps for both the roof and clerestory have been milled and are about ready for installation. Volunteers have set 1991 as a completion date for this phase of the restoration. The budget for this phase of the work is about \$8,000, mostly from gift funds. Some 500 hours of volunteer time are expected.

Other work on the combine during this visit to the shop includes installing an electrical system under the clerestory roof, for future electrical lighting. The steps are being rebuilt and repairs are being made to one set of trucks including changing two wheel sets. Side sheet repairs to a section near the baggage compartment include installation of one new piece approximately 20 inches by 12 feet.

Future work, expected in 1992, will include replacing clerestory windows and re-painting the car back to its 1920s green with lettering for "The North-Western Line." Until that time, plywood painted black will cover the clerestory windows.

The car arrived at North Freedom in June 1990 on an excursion train returning from Mazomanie. For background information, see the *Gazette* (May 1990).



**Restoration of the C&NW combine will add capacity to Mid-Continent's operating fleet. Photo by Paul Swanson**

The Mid-Continent Railway *Gazette* is published by the Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 55, North Freedom, Wis. 53951, 608/522-4261, and is distributed free to members and friends of the society. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without consent of the editor, John Gruber, 1430 Drake St., Madison, Wis. 53711. Vol. 24, No. 3, September 1991. © 1991 Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society, Inc.





# Roundhouse 1

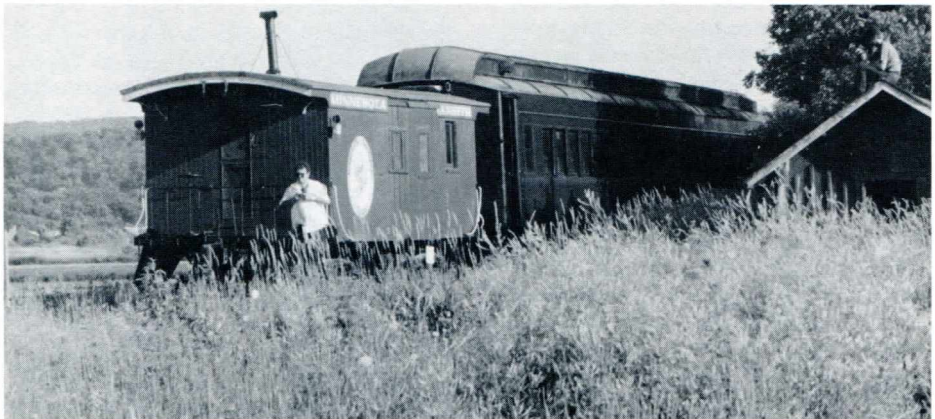
As Mid-Continent's 1991 operating season draws to a close, museum performance shows substantial improvement. Ridership totals 40,558 through the end of August, a 12.9 percent increase for the year. Big increases in July and August account for the gain. For August, for example, Mid-Continent trains carried 13,686 people, a 29.9 percent jump over a year earlier. Group tours for the month increased from 14 to 28.

The Autumn Color weekends, Oct. 5-6 and Oct. 12-13, could boost ridership even more. Some trains are filling up quickly. The schedule provides for nine trains each day. Passenger trains with first-class service run at 10, 11:30, 1, 2:30 and 4; mixed train follow the first four trains. Two steam locomotives, WC&C no. 1 and Saginaw Timber no. 2, will be in service. No. 2 returns to service after an overhaul by its owners, the museum, and an anonymous donor; it last operated in August 1988.

The Saturday Special trains at 6 p.m. Oct. 5 and Oct. 12 feature an elegant, 2-hour dining experience in the best railroad tradition. The \$40 ticket includes hors d'oeuvres, a full dinner, and beverages. Highlights of the extensive menu are Louisiana shrimp and liver pate, for appetizers; Carbonada Criolla, a hardy Argentinean beef ragout, for the main course; and Chocolate innocence, an intense Chocolate torte.

*Midwest Living* featured Autumn Color and no. 1385 on the cover and inside of its Sept.-Oct. issue.

The board of directors election will be conducted under a new set of bylaws, approved in a mail ballot counted at the spring fling banquet. Ballots, mailed Sept. 20, must be returned by the beginning of the annual meeting Oct. 12. Regular (67) and life members (192) are eligible to vote. Candidates are Jeff Bloohm, John Gruber, and Art Oseland, incumbents; and Ken Breher, Art Daehler, and Jerry Pitzen.



Shop crews enjoyed a special train to Quartzite Lake July 6. The train is backing, after a photo runby at Osborne's crossing.

The annual banquet will be Saturday, Nov. 9, at Pierce's Viking II Restaurant in Baraboo. The cocktail hour begins at 6:30 p.m.; dinner is at 7:30 p.m. Reservations are required; call or write the office at North Freedom.

Bob Baker of Franklin, author of *Wisconsin Rails*, *North Western Motive Power*, and the *Railfan's Guide to Wisconsin*, will speak and show slides. His presentation will include iron ore railroads of Michigan and Minnesota; and Wisconsin Rails Revisited, old-time black and white views from around the state.

Mid-Continent continues to hold \$3 million liability insurance. The coverage, beginning Aug. 1 with St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Co., is basically the same as the previous year, but the cost is slightly less and can be paid in four installments, rather than in one amount at the beginning of the coverage year.

David Henke is no longer employed by the museum. His one-year contract expired July 31, and the board voted not to renew it.

Restoration (page 2) and repairs continue. Shop crews are preparing to reassemble locomotive 1385, inspected by the Federal Railroad Administration. Its boiler will get 140 new tubes. Crews also are preparing the rotary plow, scheduled to operate at Snow Train in 1992, for a hydrostatic test. A concrete slab has been poured in the car repair building.

**Joel Skornicka**, Mid-Continent's consultant, reported on the development program at the September board meeting. He has finished research on corporations and foundations, and is beginning individual donor research. Letters are being sent to prospective members of an advisory committee. The fund raising committee and board are setting priorities, in preparation for the December appeal and a 1992 campaign. Skornicka plans to report again at the November 10 meeting.

**On behalf of the Tourist Railway Association**, a Washington, D.C., attorney has petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration for a review of the FRA's "incorrect" definition of a railroad.

The FRA lacks "jurisdiction over 'railroads' other than those subject to FRA's



**Bob Verkuyl of Madison started Sept. 4 as a full-time mechanic. Verkuyl's experience includes work for Short Line Enterprises, under contract to Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City, July 1980 to Sept. 1987; Neil Ferguson, refurbishing streamlined passenger cars in Jamestown, Calif., Nov. 1979 to June 1980; and Sierra Railroad, seasonal worker in Sonora, Calif., Sept. 1976 to Oct. 1979. Locomotive projects have included Dardanelle & Russellville 8, Virginia & Truckee 22 and 25, and Nevada Northern 40.**

jurisdiction prior to 1988, except for high-speed lines" and lacks "discretion to deviate from the Congressional definition of what constitutes a 'railroad' in determining which entities should pay a user fee," said Francis G. McKenna of Anderson and Pendleton, chartered attorneys. McKenna has specialized in transportation law and finance for about 20 years.

"Since 1989, FRA has urged upon the public an interpretation of its jurisdiction as allegedly granted by Congress when that body passed the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 1988 which is totally incorrect. An analysis of the legislative history of the act clearly demonstrates that the only extension of FRA's jurisdiction was to provide for the coverage of high speed rail," he wrote.

"The misapplication of the act has, and will continue to have, a serious economic impact on some of TRAIN's membership who are not subject to FRA regulation."



TRAIN is an organization of more than 350 tourist railroads, railroad museums, tourist railroad suppliers, trolley lines, and similar organizations. Mid-Continent is a member.

**Members in print.** Art Daehler's articles include "Modular Railroading Can Feature all the Operating Possibilities Found on Large Permanent Layouts," Oct. 1990, and "Scenery From a Jar" by Spike McGinty, March 1991, *Railroad Model Craftsman*; plus seven articles in *NMRA Bulletin*.

**Ron Jones** is at Sunny Hill Health Care Center, Rm. 112, 4325 Nakoma Rd., Madison, Wis. 53711. "Unfortunately, his condition is not good because of his illness and it is possible that he may not immediately recognize any of his callers but I can assure you that if you are in a position to stop by and say 'thanks and hello,' it would be worthwhile," according to John F. Jenswold, a former Mid-Continent president.

"Ron Jones was one of the founding fathers of Mid-Continent and throughout the years served as board member, officer, and spent many hours of work, not only in restoring equipment, working on the crews, but also in promoting Mid-Continent in every way possible," Jenswold writes.

"When I was elected president in the late 1960s, our financial plight was dreadful. We were tens of thousands of dollars in debt, our credit was exhausted and we were faced with a real prospect of financial collapse. Ron took over as financial manager at that time and for three years performed a very thankless job of handling the finances at Mid-Continent .... I, and those who were part of the administration at that time, can verify that it was through Ron Jones that we were able to turn a heavy indebtedness into a very positive bank balance."

**Exhibitions.** St. John's Uihlein Peters Gallery, 1840 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee, has included work by Al Bertrum, John Brunner, Mike Danneman, Bruce D. Friesch, Edward Green, John Gruber,

Russ Porter, Gil Reid, and Tucker Smith in a "Railroading" exhibit, Sept. 22 to Oct. 20. Reid, Porter, Friesch, and Gruber show Mid-Continent or its equipment. The gallery is open Sundays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. and during the week by appointment.

"Styled to Sell: the Industrial Designs of Brooks Stevens" is at the State Historical Society museum, 30 N. Carroll St. in Madison, from Oct. 1 to Jan. 12. Stevens' work includes styling for the Skytop Lounges and *Olympian Hiawatha* for the Milwaukee Road and the Wienermobiles for Oscar Mayer. The Madison Art Center's exhibit, "Brooks Stevens: Designs in Motion," Aug. 17 to Nov. 10 shows his boats and automobiles.

**Death.** Dick Jenson, Chicago, March 16. He will be remembered for the excursions he operated with his own locomotive until the coming of Amtrak. Services were private and his ashes were sent to Florida for burial in a family cemetery lot.

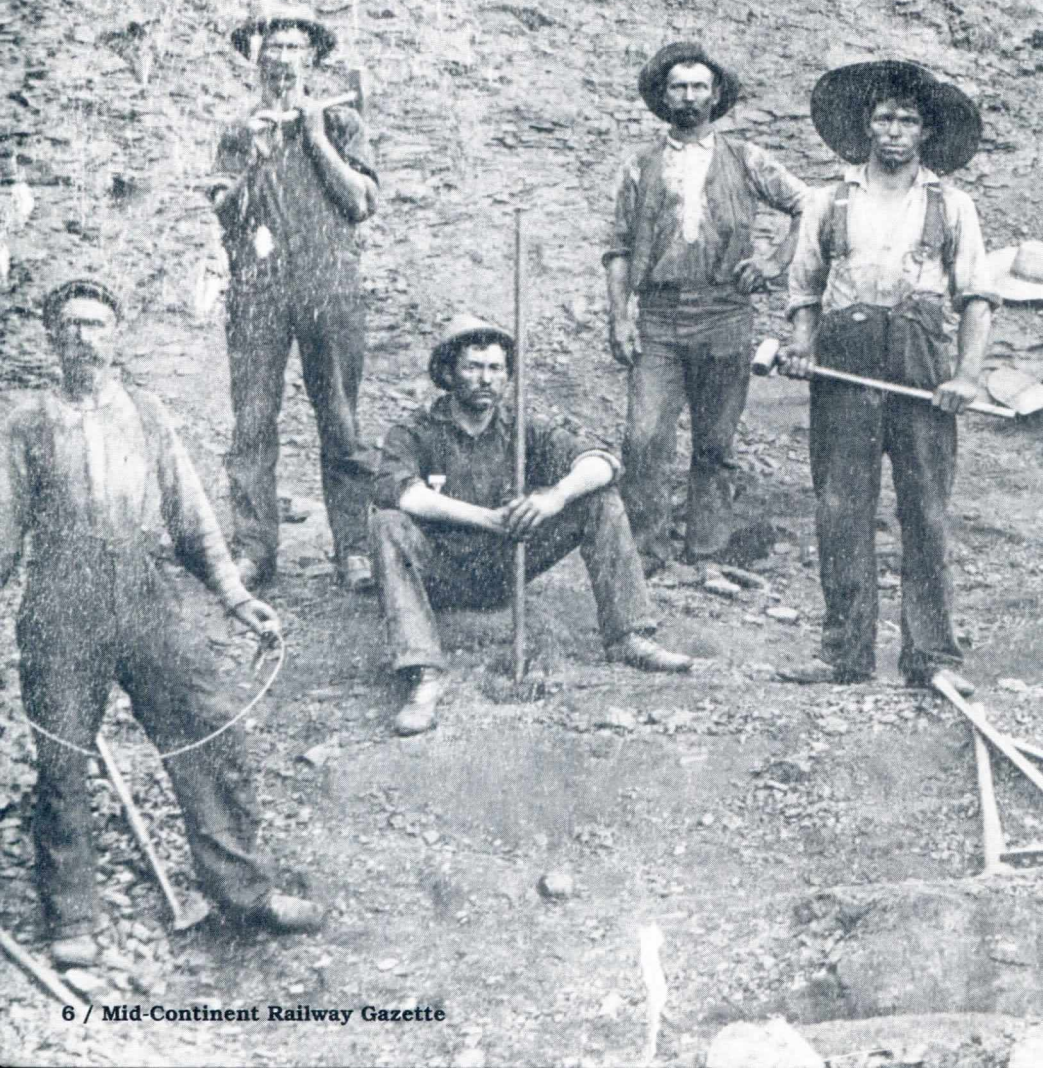
**Memorial.** William L. "Bill" Turk, 76, Monona, June 24. He worked for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 54 years before retiring in 1991. Mid-Continent received four memorials from members of his family.



**The Quality Inn in West Baraboo, attached to Papa's Restaurant, had a Mid-Continent display for about two months through the grand opening Sept. 18. Banquet rooms are named for area attractions; the Engine Room recognizes Mid-Continent. Photo by Jeff Haertlein**



# IRON PAINT

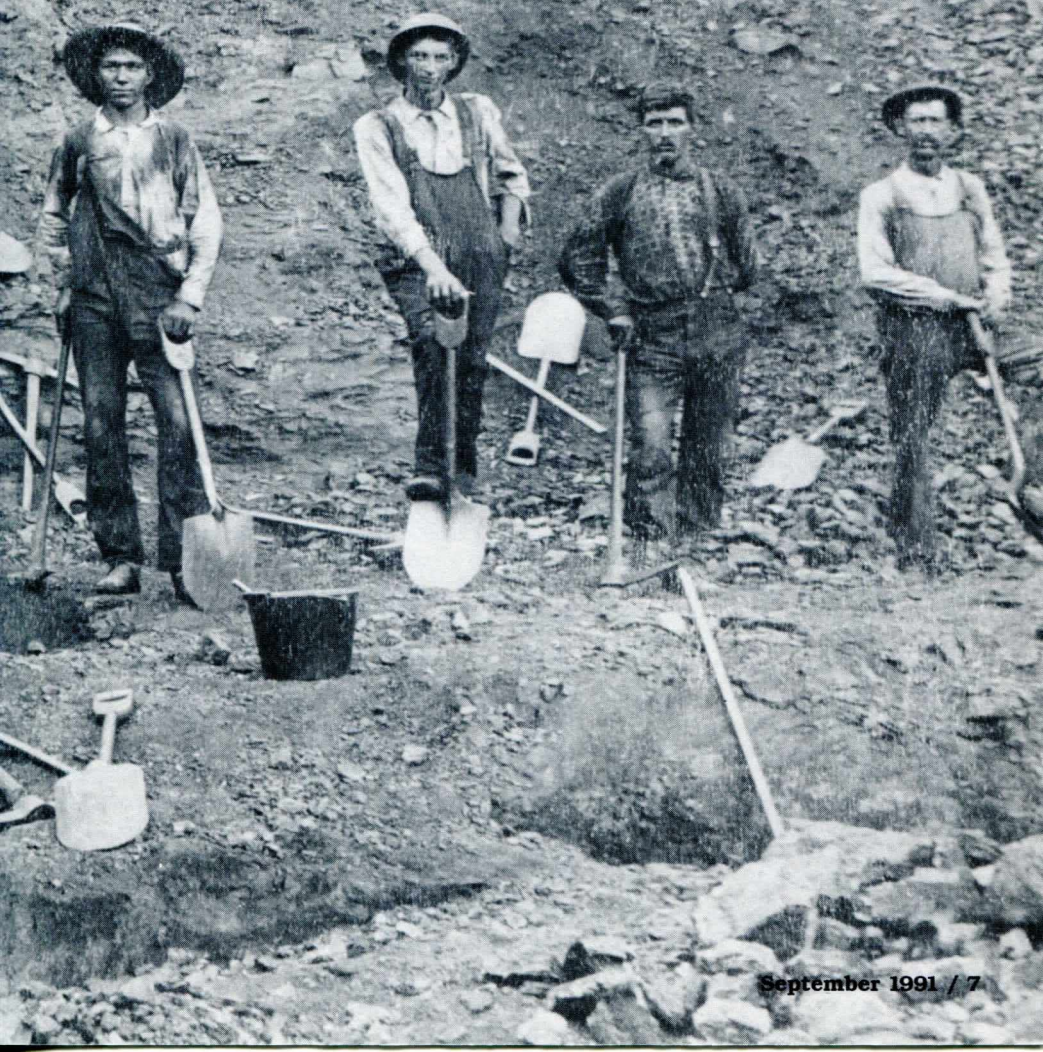




*This is the second in a series of articles on the North Freedom mining industry. The first, *La Rue's Legacy*, appeared in September 1989. Don Ginter helped with research.*

**While North Freedom's first mining boom created loads of excitement, another use for the iron ore—metallic paint pigment—had far greater impact on the railroad scene.**

**The North Western railroad's efforts to find inexpensive, good quality paint led to the development of its pioneering testing department in 1886, and construction of a paint manufacturing building at its Chicago shops a few years later.**





For some time, geologists had been aware of iron deposits in Sauk County, 43 miles northwest of the state capital of Madison. Iron ore is found in four areas in the state—the North Freedom district is the smallest.

The paint business started in 1885 as the *Baraboo Republic* announced in February that Edmund Brewster (1815-1885) and his son, Frank T. Brewster (1858-1914), would market a mineral paint, “the product of their mine on Mineral Ridge, in the town of Freedom.” The C&NW delivered “several tons of machinery” in May, to be moved to the Brewsters’ land south of town. The smoke stack for the mill’s furnace was put up in September. Frank continued in the business after his father’s death in November.

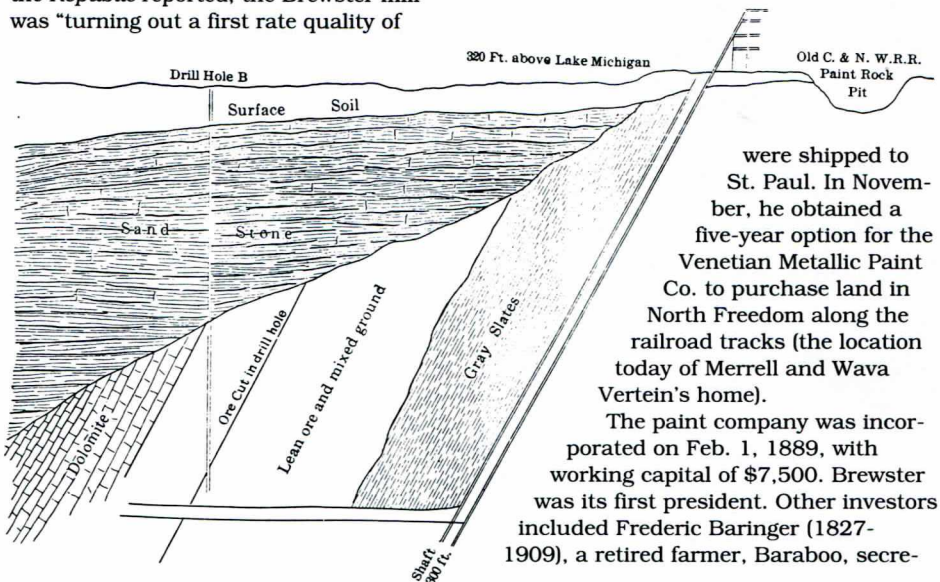
The startup did not go smoothly. In March 1886, Frank Crikelair, a Green Bay painter and paper-hanger, traveled to Sauk County. “There is a bed of iron ore a few miles from Baraboo, of excellent quality for making paint, but the machinery in the mill is not of the right description, being rollers instead of grinders, and will not reduce the ore to a fine enough dust,” said the *Green Bay Advocate*. By August, the *Republic* reported, the Brewster mill was “turning out a first rate quality of

paint, which finds a ready market” and purchasing new machinery which would boost production to a ton an hour.

Brewster’s attention turned to the search for richer ore in 1887. He rounded up investors and brought in mining engineers from Ashland and St. Paul-Minneapolis to assist in the drilling. People were optimistic as an assay done at the University of Wisconsin in Madison showed 65 percent metallic iron. Brewster and his associates obtained mining options in the Town of Freedom and nearby towns, including the farms of George and Eunice Douglas and Caroline Dorward near today’s La Rue.

The bad news came in June 1888, when in an article headlined “We Told You So,” the *Republic* said the pumps in the Douglas mine “were pulled out, the fire put out in the engine, and the mine allowed to fill with water.” The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey later said about \$40,000 had been spent sinking several shafts, and the material from the exploration averaged about 35 percent iron.

Brewster didn’t waste time in turning his attention back to the paint business. In August, more than 77 barrels of paint



were shipped to St. Paul. In November, he obtained a five-year option for the Venetian Metallic Paint Co. to purchase land in North Freedom along the railroad tracks (the location today of Merrell and Wava Verlein’s home).

The paint company was incorporated on Feb. 1, 1889, with working capital of \$7,500. Brewster was its first president. Other investors included Frederic Baringer (1827-1909), a retired farmer, Baraboo, secre-

**A cross section of the no. 1 shaft of the Illinois mine (near today’s La Rue) shows the location of the C&NW paint pit. Illustration is from *Iron Age*, March 9, 1911.**



tary; and Gottfried Schloemer, Milwaukee, treasurer. Schloemer (1842-1921), a cooper, owned a saw and stave mill at North Freedom and farm land nearby. In Milwaukee, he was well known as the inventor of the first gasoline propelled automobile and tractor.

The Venetian company purchased "all the iron ore in sight at the Douglas mine, about 3,000 tons," to grind into paint, and constructed a three-story factory in the village. "The biggest excitement in town is the moving of the paint mill, which is in progress now. This looks like a boom, sure," the *Republic* said in March. The mill soon was sending out sacks and drums of the pigment, called Venetian red.

When inspected in June by the Wisconsin Commissioner of Labor Statistics, the mill had seven employees and a 45-horsepower steam engine. The company hired S. J. Carpenter as a traveling salesman.

Schloemer sold his interest in February 1891 to H. J. Drake of Cleveland, Ohio. "Mr. Drake has had a wide experience in this line and proposes to enlarge the capacity of the paint mill, which will necessitate the employment of a larger force of men. Our citizens should aid this enterprise for it will be of great benefit to the village," the *Republic's* correspondent said. Drake expanded the capacity, and installed a larger boiler.

All of the village's industrial development dreams went up in smoke when the factory burned to the ground in September in "the most disastrous fire that has ever visited North Freedom....The fire started in the elevator shaft, and in less time than it takes to tell it the entire building was wrapped in flames." The owners, who were not insured, decided not to rebuild, but to ship the ore east to be worked into paint. "While we are sorry to see the business removed from the place, we do not wish it rebuilt on the former site, as it was a cause of great anxiety to the property owners near it," said "Cinder Ella," the *Republic's* North Freedom correspondent. Later that month, the Sauk County *Democrat* noted that the company had "made an assignment to H. W. Nickerson of Milwaukee." (When Verteins built the foundation

for the house 37 years ago, they found ashes from the fire.)

By early 1892, the C&NW had leased, for five years, the Dorward mine, one of the few properties Brewster used his option to purchase. (Brewster fully paid for the 37 acres in 1899.) Newspapers reported that the iron paint "will be used on the company's cars and many of the buildings along the line."

The North Western's venture turned out considerably better. George M. Davidson, hired as chemist in April 1886, started "in a small way" to make some of the standard paints, and was so successful that the company built at its W. 40th St. shops a 38- by 28-foot brick paint mill "equipped principally for the manufacture of mineral paint from the raw material." To simplify ordering, the company issued a standard paint list in July 1890.

A trade journal, the *Railroad Gazette*, recognized the efforts in 1892 with an article explaining that the C&NW "has found after several years' experience that it can make all the paint used on its lines much cheaper and of a better quality than it can buy it." Davidson, who had established the first railway chemical lab in Chicago, stayed with the company for nearly 43 years, advancing to engineer of tests in 1888 and industrial engineer in 1921 before retiring Jan. 1, 1929.

More information about the paint factory came at the turn of the century, as mining people from Duluth made a second attempt to find profitable ore at North Freedom. The "finest quality" of mineral paint was produced, recalled the *Reedsburg Free Press* in 1900. The Chicago and North Western Railroad used the paint on its buildings, freight cars, and bridges. Since the fire, the ore was shipped to Chicago and other cities for the manufacture of paint, "quite an extensive business being done in that line." A car of "paint ore" was being shipped daily in 1901, the *Republic* said.

William S. Grubb (1833-1910), a former Baraboo resident and Chicago real estate man, claimed Sauk County's mineral paint had no equal in the world for "durability and 'body.'" The tin roof on his home in

Baraboo was painted with ground iron ore and boiled linseed oil, and "will stand 50 years of use I am confident," he said in 1900. In Chicago, he used the mineral paint, which "fairly filled up the open pores of the wood and made the ground work...more suitable for finishing and beautifying purposes."

Grubb told of the \$7,500 plant friends had built for the C&NW to manufacture paint from the North Freedom ore. "I know of a new machinery that excels all others: that not only pulverizes the mineral as fine as ordinary flour but removes all traces of sand and grit, and is warranted to do as promised. One machine will turn out several tons of paint per day."

When writing about its paint making in 1904, the railroad company noted that the iron ore was shipped to its Chicago shops. "The grinding of the roasted ore is done in a cyclone pulverizer that reduces the ore to an impalpable powder, that is left without any grit whatever," according to *Yesterday and Today* (1910). (When Bill Armstrong started work for the C&NW in 1946, the company was buying its paint. He didn't hear about the metallic product until becoming active at Mid-Continent.)

Adopted as the standard for the railroad's outdoor structures and cars, the paint spread across the Midwest and the company's depots and other buildings remained dark red into the 1960s, long after the iron paint had been replaced by other paints. The C&NW used the metallic paint for the same reason farmers used it for barns—it was inexpensive and durable.

Metallic paint was made at other places in Wisconsin, also. The *Wisconsin Gazetteer* (1888) lists nine paint manufacturers, four making mineral paint. For example, Isaac Winters had a factory at Iron Ridge in Dodge County in the 1850s; the company was incorporated in 1885 and remained in business until 1936. James R. Ricketson established a plant in Milwaukee in 1885, also using ore from Iron Ridge.

A North Freedom residence, Ivor Bonnell, talked about the "tough" iron paint. His father, William, a carpenter until his death about 1930, used quite a

bit of iron paint. William with his brothers Jim and Frank built barns and houses in the area. The paint, Ivor said, held up well and didn't fade or peel. The south side of a barn looked the same as the north side.

Erhart Mueller, a retired Sauk County farmer who has written four books about the Town of Sumpter where he lives, recalled simply that the metallic paint was used for barns because it was the "cheapest paint around." His father always had a box of the brown powder, and when using it, mixed it with linseed oil. "We got it from Accola and Buehler [the hardware store in Prairie du Sac] until the 1940s. It lasted forever, but was not bright red like paint today."

In more technical language, a 1948 book on paint technology edited by William von Fisher explained how a "first-quality barn paint will usually be made from high-grade iron oxide pigments such as Venetian Reds and/or Persian Gulf Oxides in combination with extender pigments such as calcium carbonate and/or magnesium silicate."

Today, the iron paint is made occasionally, but in decreasing amounts because it is difficult and time consuming to grind. Because of the low cost, it is useful for primer—it is not brilliant enough for anything else—and for red mortar.

The metallic paint factories of North Freedom and other communities represent a step in the evolution of paint and varnish manufacturing, which started early in the 19th century. The short-lived North Freedom plant had a impact on railroad-ing, while the products from the other, longer lasting paint factories left their color all across the landscape. JG

*The article here in a revision of a paper which first appeared in Pioneer American Society Transactions (1988).*





# Board Minutes

John Gruber, Secretary

## MAY 19, 1991

Board members present were Bill Raia, Jeff Bloohm, Tom Hruska, Steve Brist, Art Oseland, John Gruber, and Skip Lichter. Also present were David Henke, executive director.

President Bloohm called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m. He reported that the bylaws amendments, voted on at the Spring Fling banquet, carried 56 to 42. He asked Henke to maintain a file of amendments.

David and Jeannie Wantz appeared with a request to purchase the cabin along the Baraboo River with about half an acre of land. They agree to pay the same fees as camp car owners. Lichter moved, Raia seconded, to approve the offer, pending satisfaction of legal requirements. Carried with Gruber voting no.

Minutes of the April meeting were approved as corrected.

The secretary reported gifts from Peter R. Hills, Lamar J. Karow, and Steven Whitsitt, annual appeal; Chris Hornocker, car shop wiring; David L. Henke, general operations. Ashley Kennedy, Evanston, Ill., wrote in support of "allowing Edward Kraemer & Sons to ship rock from the La Rue quarry." The membership secretary reported a requested from Dana Bassett to change from associate to regular member. Gruber moved, Hruska seconded, to approve the upgrade. Carried.

## Treasurer's Report

Lichter reported heavy spending at the wrong time of the year. He asked that superintendents be instructed to delay extensive expenditures because of the cash flow situation. We should think about debt reduction in the coming year. Again, he has not seen a check register.

## Executive Director's Report

The financial summary from Bill Buhmaster shows, through April, income of \$57,037, expenses of \$104,763, savings income of \$19,146, and savings expense of \$1,220. Accounts payable at the end of the month totaled \$15,724. Henke has sent department heads a memo about beginning of the season costs which are higher than income projections for June.

Henke advised that Steve Siebel, chief mechanical officer, will have steam power by Memorial Day weekend. Our insurance company recommends that the Sunday manager in charge be an officer or director. Letters have been received asking to buy or lease locomotives; in the future, Henke will get more information or offers before bringing these to the board.

Henke is discussing a letter of agreement with the food service vendor, who will not sell pop in competition with the museum's vending machines. The vendor proposed to begin service June 15. The consensus was that Henke should negotiate the best possible rate (plus electricity).

For grade school groups, Henke proposed a Mid-Continent worksheet, Operation Lifesaver coloring book, and limited pass. John Obst is handling food, Marshall Buehler staff, for Association of American Railroads group May 29. Chuck Wiesner has uniforms and table linens for the first class service. He is being asked to turn in tip money from Snow Train.

The goal is to have Mid-Continent's track rehab specifications, 38 pages long, for Kraemer finished by May 28. Mid-Continent and two other museums are working with an insurance company on a model for insurance development. Brochures for autumn color and snow train will be delivered next week; the season brochure is not done. Highway signage is being improved. Materials were picked up May 9 from former fund raiser Bob Sladky. Henke and Buhmaster is looking into rewriting the bank loan.

Bill Raia discussed FRA paperwork. He will work with superintendents on writing exemptions, if needed.

Raia asked about camp car and property/casualty insurance fees. Henke is getting a list of owners and will send out invoices. Steve Brist distributed a memo suggesting changes which would "make it clear that the museum is the 'landlord' and the camp car owner is the 'tenant.' It would protect the museum and would make it clear that the owners have control over their own cars."

## Old Business

Raia moved, Hruska seconded, to go into executive session for a performance review of Henke's nine months as executive director. Raia moved, Hruska seconded, to come out of executive session. Hruska moved, Raia seconded, to extend Henke's contract to Oct. 31 and review his performance again at the July meeting. Carried. Bloohm will meet with Henke to discuss comments from the review.

The board took a lunch break from 1:10 to 1:53. Raia, who is locomotive engineer for the afternoon, gave a proxy to Bloohm.

Bob C. Welke, superintendent of operations, said, in a written report, that "the season is off to a good start despite the fact that we are running with diesel power." The first truckload of coal has arrived. Orton Johnson has been doing a good job calling crews. He also reported that Jon Neumann,

who is not qualified, had been switching cars. Copies of the rule book are needed.

Lichter, representing the owners, said he had heard "negative comments" about operating Saginaw Timber #2. Brist moved, Gruber seconded, that when repairs are complete, Mid-Continent would operate #2 after a joint inspection by the museum and the owners. Carried, with Oseland voting no.

Oseland moved, Lichter seconded, that memberships be terminated as of today for 51 people who have not paid 1991 dues. Carried, with the provision that the people be advised of the procedures for reinstatement.

Oseland reported on plans for the shop and engine house extension. No action was taken on a stationary boiler for heating coaches and the shop, since funds are not available. No word has been received from Chuck Wiesner on a lease for combine 425.

Oseland moved, Hruska seconded, to accept the draft of the locomotive leases as presented by Brist in April, and to send the draft to owners for comment. Carried.

Discussion continued on purchase of W&OV #1. Lichter and Paul Wolff have looked at the Cambria depot, which has been offered to the museum; they suggest we not pursue the offer. Gruber will ask a Madison contractor for suggestions on the water/sewer extension, required by Sauk County within two years.

Gruber recommended that the two fund raising appeals a year be strengthened. He will get additional mailing lists and draft the letter. He asked that the buildings on the former oil tank property (a 1990 fund raising priority) be moved before the summer mailing. He asked that Henke, who picked up additional materials and computer discs from Bob Sladky on May 9, recommend how to deal with uncompleted Sladky projects and records to assist in fund raising. A fund raising committee meeting will be held soon.

Dave Bierman will get estimates on cost of improving drainage along the new car repair shop. Lichter discussed plans for the river bank protection; some of the material will be quartzite screenings from the south yard. Board members were asked to sign up as Sunday manager in charge. Diesel locomotive C-415 is still stored at Nekoosa. Shay restoration was discussed.

Brist moved, Hruska seconded, Bloohm's appointments to a full time mechanic committee: Bloohm, Siebel, Jeff Haertlein, Tom O'Brien Jr., and Ray Buhrmaster.

## **New Business**

The rusty play ground equipment, which Vince Mathews wrote about to board members, was taken down today because of its dangerous condition.

Oseland moved, Brist seconded, to take up to \$1,600 from the interest account for repairs to the Quartzite Lake platform drain, as recommended by Bierman. Carried. Lichter suggested that Jerry Pitzer look at the plans.

Lichter recommend that people who print tickets not be involved in the sale of tickets. The recommendation will be discussed with the accountant.

The next board meeting will be Sunday, June 2. [rescheduled for June 23]

Brist moved, Gruber seconded, to adjourn. Carried at 4:31 p.m.

## **JUNE 23, 1991**

Board members present were Jeff Bloohm, Stan Nordeng, Greg Verthein, Steve Brist, Skip Lichter, and John Gruber. Also present were Tom O'Brien Jr., vice president, and David Henke, executive director. Bill Raia, Art Oseland, and Tom Hruska could not attend the meeting; they sent proxies to Bloohm.

President Bloohm called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. The minutes of the May meeting were approved as distributed.

The secretary reported gifts from Roth S. Schleck, annual appeal; Nabisco Foundation, match of S. Karow; Lanoy G. Prine, calendar, postage; Anonymous, postage, ties, honorarium for *Steamer* editor, restoration of Mt. Harvard; Eliot A. Keller, Vince Mathews, Michael Harrington, Brian Bachman, cement for car shed; Robert McKay, payment on car shed; Bruce Parfett, computer labels; David Henke, camera shop expenses, supplies; Chris Hornocker, west yard expansion; Georgia Pacific, matching, for C-145 diesel; John De Meester, Erie Railroad key.

Skip Lichter, treasurer, again urged departments to be cautious in how money is spent. We should start paying more on the coach shed loan, also, he said.

## **Executive Director's Report**

A financial review for May has been distributed to board members. Also distributed was the CPA's unaudited compilation for the fiscal year ending Oct. 31, 1990, showing assets of \$983,226. The compilation outlines support and revenue of \$428,150 and costs and expenses of \$396,175, for an excess of support and revenue of \$31,975.

Henke, Bloohm, Gruber, and Lichter met Saturday with the Walter Smith, the Baraboo CPA who now handles our accounting and auditing, and Bernard Fugate, an associate; a management letter outlining changes in procedures will follow. Henke said he had been aware of accounting problems as early as last October. With assistance from the accountants, the checking account has been changed to a NOW account paying interest.

Year to date admissions total 12,056, a drop of 4.94 percent. Revenue, when gift shop and first class services are included, is about even. Group tours increased by nine for May.

Among meetings attended, State Rep. Dale Schultz, clean water act and sewer/water connection (other state or federal funds may be possible to fund the connection, Henke reported); Paul Heitmann, informal review of excursion program; fund raising committee, with consultant Joel Skornicka. A meeting at Circus World is set next week.

Bob C. Welke presented a written operations report for May. For Snow Train, he proposed "running a number of trains during the day Friday for the railfans" with no night photo session Saturday.



This will be discussed under new business. Engineering Supt. Jay Slinde said 320 ties have been installed, and another tie order is in. We are now ordering grade 3 ties, which cost only 78 cents more than an industrial grade tie. Brush at the highway W crossing was discussed; President Bloohm will write adjoining land owners, ask them for permission to have brush cut. Steve Siebel will report later on the mechanic department.

Henke recommends Wally Tisler for a manager in charge position for Sundays.

A letter of agreement has been signed with Sandy Retzlaff for the food concession, which opened June 17. She will pay the museum \$5 a day plus \$1 a day for electricity, and stay open weekends in the fall through Oct. 20. Museum retains soft drink sales.

There is nothing to report from Kraemer. We have not sent the review of bid specifications and contract documents.

An insurance application has been sent to St. Paul Fire and Marine for a pilot program for railroad museums and short lines. Insurance may be paid monthly without a 14 percent penalty.

Autumn Color, Snow Train, and season brochures are printed and are being distributed. Signs at Mid-Continent and small road signs are being installed. Blue flags are being ordered. Full 1990 reports from departments were distributed to board members; a condensed version will be prepared for the public.

Odd Johnson may have a buyer for the building in Colgate donated to Mid-Continent. Referred to old business.

Jenny Oseland's proposal for a full page ad in a pageant booklet was discussed; it was decided to have the same size ad as last year.

Fund raising proposals will be taken up under old business as a part of committee reports.

A review of the excursion division with defined guidelines is recommended.

## Other Reports

Tom O'Brien Jr., who attended the spring TRAIN meeting in Sacramento, presented a written report on a meeting May 1 with the Federal Railroad Administration and California Public Utilities Commission. TRAIN has retained Frank McKenna, a Washington attorney specializing in transportation law, to represent the industry in the FRA regulation issue.

O'Brien received at home a letter from the FRA, dated May 22, requesting information for a "railroad safety user fee assessment." Mid-Continent will receive a preliminary assessment notice about July 15, and a final assessment about Aug. 15 requesting payment, estimated at \$500, by Sept. 15. "The U.S. Congress has mandated the assessment and collection of railroad user fees toward balancing the federal budget under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990," the letter said in part.

While providing information, O'Brien separately wrote to the FRA, protesting the notice of "as an excessive fee that will place an undue financial hardship" on Mid-Continent.

Siebel reported that WC&C #1 is running, with a new cab. Before operating next spring, it will need

new boiler tubes and a rear flue sheet. The truck bolster for D&R #9 should be done later in July. Stay bolts have been cut out. Work on #1385 is next; it will go into the engine house early in July. He will prepare a written report for the next board meeting, including a budget and timetable for work. He will undertake a joint inspect of Saginaw Timber #2 with the owners, as requested by the board. The army reserve unit at West Allis has offered to rebuild #6 at its shop; the minor expenses could be covered in the mechanical department budget. More information will be given at the July board meeting.

## Old Business

Brist moved, Nordeng seconded, to authorize Johnson to sell the building at Colgate in the best interests of Mid-Continent. Carried.

Lichter moved, Vertein seconded, to use the proceeds from the sale to pay down the loan on the car repair facility. Gruber moved, Brist seconded, to table the motion until the building is sold. Carried.

The proposed shop and engine house extension, 100 feet by 70 feet, was discussed. This has low priority from the shop committee right now, and will not be placed on the agenda until a report is presented.

Brist moved, Vertein seconded, to oppose the FRA's railroad user fee. Carried.

Discussion was delayed on locomotive leases, since the office has not yet mailed leases to owners.

The proposed lease on combine 425 was discussed. Bloohm will write the owner, Chuck Wiesner, to find out if his lease proposal is dead or alive.

The board took a break for lunch.

Gruber reported on a meeting of the fund raising committee with consultant Joel Skornicka in Madison. Brist moved, Nordeng seconded, to adopt the proposal contained in Skornicka's letter of June 17, not to exceed \$5,000. "With the 30th anniversary of Mid-Continent in North Freedom in 1993, this is an ideal time to establish fund raising priorities, goals, and procedures," he said.

Gruber moved, Vertein seconded, to use up to \$1,925 from the annual appeal for 11 equipment display signs and stands, requested in a June 6 letter from Don Ginter, curator. Carried. The request had been endorsed by the fund raising committee.

In a memo to board members, Jim Neubauer proposed hiring a Chicago advertising agency for \$1,800 a month (\$21,600 a year) to boost Mid-Continent's "stagnant" patronage figures. Neubauer introduced Gene J. Quiri and Thomas W. McGavin from Ross Llewellyn, Inc., 345 N. Canal St., who explained their five page proposal. Among their comments: "Over time, you have achieved some very impressive exposure, but it does not seem that there has been enough consistency to your promotion efforts."

The board thanked Neubauer, Quiri, and McGavin for the presentation, but decided that the museum was not able financially to move ahead on the proposal.

Lichter suggested, as soon as possible, a day for local people to become better acquainted with the

museum. He moved, Verstein seconded, that the executive director advertise, for a "slow" day, a \$1 fare for Sauk County residents. Carried.

A goal is to have a full time mechanic by Aug. 1. The committee plans to have a job description for approval at the July board meeting. Members will be notified of the opening and given an opportunity to apply.

Billboard signs were discussed. Mid-Continent has a contract with Vivid, saying three signs would be up in June, according to Henke. Season brochures were delivered last Friday at North Freedom, and a few days earlier for distribution by Ad-Lit. Henke had major problems getting season brochure negatives returned by previous printer.

The office has not sent out camp car leases, as requested by the board. Information is on file with the insurance agency. An addendum, drafted by Brist in May, will be sent to Bill Raia for comment from the camp car committee.

Brist moved, Nordeng seconded, to commit to off line excursions in 1992. Tabled to August. The president requested Henke to coordinate excursion decisions, previously a responsibility of Wiesner.

Using the Rotary plow at Snow Train '92 was discussed, with Lichter in charge. A decision will be made in July.

Brist moved, Verstein seconded, to appoint Wally Tisler manager in charge Sundays. He is to be paid for 2 hours at the beginning and 2 hours at the end of the day. Carried.

Verstein moved, Nordeng seconded, to award an honorary life membership to Mrs. Rick Hill, in memory of her husband, who died in an automobile accident. Carried.

Nordeng moved, Brist seconded, that Henke coordinate first class service, previously a responsibility of Wiesner.

Brist moved, Gruber seconded, to endorse a proposal for a national railway heritage foundation. Carried.

Lichter will report at the next meeting on the feasibility of his suggestion for a wooden car day.

Neubauer returned to the meeting with the representatives of Ross Llewellyn. He had escorted them on a tour and ride on the 2 p.m. train. If the museum can give the agency a three month job for a special event, he will donate 50 percent of the cost.

Lichter reported broken batteries from diner-lounge 2017 were gone, and batteries from the GE engine were in the 2017.

Gruber told the board he will be helping, at the request of people from Mazomanie, with a photo run as a part of the Mazomanie Railroad Celebration in October. Mid-Continent is not sponsoring off line trips in 1991.

Brist moved, Nordeng seconded, to have the night photo session at Snow Train only on Friday, as requested by Welke. Carried, 6-3, with Gruber, Raia, and Lichter voting no.

Brist moved, Gruber seconded, to adjourn. Carried.

## JULY 14, 1991

Board members present were Art Oseland, Skip Lichter, Jeff Bloohm, Tom Hruska, Stan Nordeng, Greg Verstein, Steve Brist, and John Gruber. Also present were Lovina Tisler, Wally Tisler, Shirley Emhoff-Bender, and Chris Hornocker. Bill Raia could not attend the meeting; he sent a proxy to Bloohm.

Minutes of the June meeting were approved as corrected. Secretary Gruber reported gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Phil Lange, annual appeal; and James Kenna, Jon Neumann, Bruce Parfitt, and Greg Verstein, value of Bobcat rental.

Gruber also reported a *Gazette* is being printed. When time permits, he plans a membership/readership survey; the only cost to the museum would be for postage. He has talked with Walter Smith about the CPA's management letter.

A copy of Francis G. McKenna's petition and comments, submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration on behalf of TRAIN, has been received. The comments address two issues: "(1) FRA lack of jurisdiction over 'railroads' other than those subject to its jurisdiction prior to 1988. Congress in 1988 extended the jurisdiction of FRA to cover high speed rail lines. No other entities were included in this expansion of jurisdiction. (2) FRA lacks the discretion to discriminate as to what 'railroads' are to be charged a user fee and what 'railroads' are not to be charged a users fee." McKenna is a Washington, D.C., attorney specializing in transportation issues.

Treasurer Skip Lichter said we are in a tight fiscal situation. He has co-signed \$10,000 in checks in the last week. We are out of money already. He is concerned about having funds available in the winter to keep the lights on.

## Executive Director's Report

David Henke, who was in the Baraboo hospital for a week, sent a letter to President Bloohm, dated July 12, saying his doctor would "discussion your returning to work" after the next appointment on July 25. Henke requested payment through July 22 for vacation and sick leave, and unscheduled leave without pay until he is able to return to work.

Bill Buhrmaster discussed the financial summary he prepared. Through June, income is \$120,884; expenses, \$195,856; savings income, \$24,296; and savings expense, \$6,196. Accounts payable total \$47,428. Except for two departments, spending is in line with the budget. June accounts were sent to the auditor last Friday. Gruber discussed Smith's management letter, expected next week; he will send copies to board members and officers.

In Henke's absence, Lovina Tisler reported on office activities: Revenues and ridership, as of July 12 total revenue is down 2.3 percent; group tours, the month of July is looking good; inspection, June 27 by North Freedom fire department; Snow Train tips, \$773 check from Chuck Wiesner has been returned for insufficient funds; clerical/light maintenance, recommend retaining Kim Phelps at least 20 hours a week until Aug. 21 (her work through CESA #5 youth program ends July 19);



draft locomotive leases, will be mailed out; Independence Day train, ad in the *Shopper Stopper* brought 93 coupons, 337 Sauk County fares at \$1—most of the people had never been here before.

Dave Bierman has borrowed the WICT Hyrail truck this weekend to spray the line.

Lichter reminded employees and members to spend only enough time in the office to conduct business. It was suggested that the operating timetable include a public relations reminder.

### Other Reports

Bloom presented a June 24 letter from the Peer Review Committee about a safety matter during Snow Train operations. Lichter has agreed to wear a bright red T shirt with SKIP written across the front and SAFETY ALWAYS on the back. Brist moved, Hruska seconded, to accept the findings of the committee. Carried.

Gruber reported on fund raising. He has notified Joel Skornicka of the board's acceptance of Skornicka's proposal; a report in August will include suggested names for an advisory committee. A mailing is going out late in July; help from the office will be needed. Paul Swanson has requested funds to help restore the C&NW combine.

### Old Business

Robert F. Welke, membership secretary, recommended 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 year pins, at a cost of \$1,791. Brist suggested a special pin to recognize volunteer hours. Nordeng moved, Vertein seconded, to approve, for the next fiscal year, the concept of seven separate pins, with the addition of a pin for members who contribute 200 or more volunteer hours. Carried.

Bloom reported on the full time mechanic committee meeting yesterday (July 13). All agreed we have been falling behind in locomotive work. Two resumes have been received. Before the August board meeting, the committee will meet again to finish a job description, recommend a rate of pay and probationary period, and check references. Gruber moved, Oseland seconded, to notify members of the job opening in the *Steamer*. Carried with Bloom voting no and Lichter abstaining.

The executive director's position was discussed. Lichter moved, Vertein seconded, to terminate Henke's employment at the end of the contract, July 31, and to withdraw the offer of a 3-month extension. Carried, with Brist and Hruska voting no.

Chief mechanical officer, Steve Siebel, advised Bloom that if the board requests the Rotary plow for Snow Train in February, the mechanical department will have the plow ready. Gruber moved, Nordeng seconded, to operate the Rotary plow for Snow Train. Carried.

Lichter reported he is continuing to talk with wooden car restorers about a wooden car day after the season. Funds would go for wooden car restoration.

Vertein moved, Brist seconded, it take action to place a lien on DL&W combine 425, for funds due from its owner, Charles A. Wiesner, as follows: \$773 (tips for first class service at Snow Train, check 7484 returned) and \$200 for moving private car Dover Plains in excursion train to Mazomanie (board minutes, Dec. 10, 1989), plus any legal fees. Carried. Gruber will follow up with a Baraboo attorney.

Switching charges will be discussed at the August meeting.

Brist moved, Oseland seconded, not to switch any equipment off the property if owners have outstanding bills. Carried.

McKeena's FRA comments and petition and the FRA users fee were discussed. Brist suggested that Mid-Continent's representation make TRAIN aware of concerns about the FRA steam boiler codes which date from the 1950s and do not reflect today's engineering practices.

Vertein moved, Hruska seconded, to hire Kim Phelps up to 40 hours a week, as needed, for clerical/light maintenance. Carried.

Swanson's proposal for funds for restoration of the exterior of the C&NW combine was discussed. Brist moved, Nordeng seconded, to approval up to \$5,710 for the project: \$3,100 from the annual appeal, \$2,500 from shop extension; and \$110 from unassigned. Carried.

Lichter said usable batteries have been scrapped. He reminded the board of a policy saying that nothing could leave the property without the approval of the board or the executive director. With Siebel's approval, Jon Neumann delivered batteries from the engine house to a scrapper; Neumann turned in a check for \$33. Hruska will find out what happened to the batteries from the Montana Western. The batteries from the GE locomotive, temporary used in diner/lounge 2017, are going back in the GE today.

Nordeng moved, Brist seconded, to adjourn at 12:40 p.m.

## Gifts to Mid-Continent

Mid-Continent is receiving recognition for its preservation efforts, and especially for its important collection of wood passenger and freight equipment. Your continuing support will help us achieve national prominence as a turn-of-the-century, steam short-line railroad museum. Send gifts to Mid-Continent, P.O. Box 55, North Freedom, Wis. 53951.

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# SCHEDULED

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## October

- 5-6 Autumn Color
- 12-13 Autumn Color
- 12 Annual meeting, 8 p.m.,  
Railroad Inn Cafe, North Freedom
- 20 Directors meeting, 9 a.m.
- 20 Last day of weekend operations

## November

- 2-3 TRAIN convention, Duluth
- 9 Annual banquet. Bob Baker,  
author of *Wisconsin Rails*, speaks
- 10 Directors meeting, 9 a.m.

## December

- 8 Directors meeting, 9 a.m.  
(no members meeting)

## January

- 11 Members meeting, 8 p.m.
- 12 Directors meeting, 9 a.m.

## February

- 8 Members meeting, 8 p.m.
- 9 Directors meeting, 9 a.m.
- 15-16 Snow Train '92

Meetings are at the office building or depot unless announced; call 608/522-4261.

**Cover.** After the Labor Day week-end picnic, members enjoy a ride to the end of the line. The train is approaching the highway W crossing, which has been cleared of brush.

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# MID-CONTINENT RAILWAY

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY / NORTH FREEDOM

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