



# THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 54 Number 2

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM

Where "I've Been Working On the  
Railroad" Becomes a Reality.

November—December 2021



**Wabash 1189 has paused at the Monticello Depot after completing a round trip to the North Pole on the Polar Express. Rob Doyle photo**

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George Roadcap

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John Sciutto

Vice President

Kirk Reynolds

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Syl Keller

General Manager

Doug Butzow

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Donna McClure

Secretary

Donna McClure

Registered Agent

**DIRECTORS**

Bruce Backus

David Berndt

Dylan Cantrell

John Downing

Dan Frye

Paul Jones

Bill Lygiros

Doug Nipper

Kirk Reynolds

Membership Secretary: Donna McClure donna.mcclure@mrym.org

Ticket Agent– Throttle Time Coord: John Downing  
john.downing@mrym.org

2nd Section-Yella Board Editor: Dale Jenkins  
(H) 217-423-ITRR (Cell) 217 413 6605  
264 Victoria Ave. Decatur, IL 62522  
dalejenkins@sbcglobal.net

**HOW SAFE ARE YOU!!**

**Chief Mechanical Officer  
& Supervisor Locomotive Engineers:**  
Kent McClure kent@mrym.org

**Gift Shop Managers:** John  
Downing Syl Keller, Doug Butzow

**Track Superintendent: Tom Hatchard**  
(H) 314-638-3958

**Supt. Of Transportation: Travis Atchison**  
travis.atchison@mrym.org

**General Manager: Syl Keller**  
217-493-1688

**Supervisor Loco Engineers: Tim Crouch**  
tcrouch@mrym.org

**Signal & Communications: Neal Grant**  
neal.grant@mrym.org

**Acting Curator: Kirk Reynolds**

**Crew Caller: Travis Atchison,**  
caller@mrym.org




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## THE OBSERVATION PLATFORM

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December 2021

### The Observation Platform – A Big Hand to Our Polar Express Volunteers

A big thank you to the **200+** museum volunteers, dancers, and dancer parents who helped make the Polar Express a big success this year. Given the Covid situation and the year off, we managed to power through and make a lot of kids happy. The dancers put on a great show and every rider got a cup of hot chocolate, a cookie, a bell, and a chance to talk to Santa. Our vintage train set ran without any major problems. Approximately 12,200 riders were sold tickets, assigned seats, given their tickets at the depot, and then had those tickets punched by one of our well-dressed conductors. The hobos were a huge hit and made a lot of kids laugh. The North Pole ran smoothly and Santa was always ready and waiting to board.

We need to extend a huge thank you to Debbie Dobson of Debbie's Dance Studio and Trish Trimble of Art In Motion and all their dancers, servers, and chefs, without which we would not have a show. And how about another big hand for the guys in red suites who did a fantastic helping Santa!

We have attempted to list below every museum volunteer and friend that worked directly with Polar Express. So many of you were absolutely critical to making the event work that if you were not there, things would have been a disaster! While we don't give out MVP awards, I would like to give a big hand to John Downing for his countless hours selling empty seats, taking care of requests, and answering emails. We received and sent over 2,954 emails related to Polar Express. I would also like to give special acknowledgements to Bruce Backus for running the sound and sanitizing the train, Carla Pohl for jumping in as a new conductor, and to Kathy Merriman for recruiting and organizing the North Pole elves.

The Gift Shop was critical to the success of the event so I would like to thank Carol Jones for setting it up and to Janet Roadcap for coordinating all the volunteers. I would also like to thank Donna McClure and Syl Keller for doing too many things to list, the Weckel crew for doing a fantastic job with the hot chocolate, and to Doug Butzow for coordinating the guys in the red suits. The conductors in Deluxe Class cars did a great job of providing that extra level of service. I would also like to thank the regular weekday crew for setting up the North Pole, getting the train ready, cleaning the cars during the week, and so many other tasks: Paul Jones, Syl Keller, Dave Marshall, Al Strange, Bruce Backus, Kent McClure, and Kirk Reynolds. We also could not run any trains without the help of all the volunteers in the track, mechanical, and operating departments working throughout the year. Last but not least, I would also like to thank everyone in the community who helped the event including the Mid-Piatt and Bement volunteer Fire Departments, the City of Monticello, the Monticello Community Building, the Monticello Chamber of Commerce, Subway Restaurant, Filippo's Pizza & Italian Food,

and Holly's Country Kitchen.

I am sure I have overlooked somebody that should be on the following list, so PLEASE let me know and I will try to make amends.

**Train Crew:** Bruce Backus, Jim Bilborrow, Dylan Cantrell, Paul Jones, Kent McClure, Tom Scott Jr, Matt Weaver

**Tickets/Website:** Doug Capuder, Erik Coleman, Brian Downing, John Downing, Derek Kouzmanoff, Matt Kluge, Nao Nishio, Art Purchase, Tom Roadcap

**Conductors:** Dave Berndt, John Crawford, Rob Doyle, Corbin Edwards, Daniel Frye, Dale Jenkins, Syl Keller, Carla Pohl, George Roadcap, Dennis Slone, Dan Wormhoudt

**Deluxe Class Conductors:** Mark Becker, Doug Butzow, Neal Grant, Kirk Reynolds, John Sciutto

**Hobos:** Bill Crisp, Xander Crisp, Dave Ogden, Justin Phippen, Mitch Van Zant, Connor (ex-Hero Boy)

**Red Suits:** Rocky Allison, Mike Bane, Ken Frye, Doug Harlan, Jack Huddleston, Ray Kuznicki, Don Ritche, Carl Williford

**Hot Chocolate:** Al Manint, Jim Payne, Kathy Weckel, Mark Weckel, Shelby Weckel

**North Pole/Stair Tower:** Travis Hunt, Jim Maltby, Dave Marshall, Doug Nipper, Al Strange

**North Pole Elves:** Susan Chumbley & family, Leo Goebel, Sean and Colleen Killian & family, Anne Kirby & family, Erin and Corey Kindred & family, Mae Knittle, Gail Lefever, Kathy Merriman, Ken Merriman, Olive McCleary, Olivia Ray, Christian Schluter & his dad.

**Gift Shop:** Christina Bradley, Sophia Bradley, Nicholas Clayborn, Jeff Clodfeldter, Julie Clodfeldter, Henry Dahman, Lily Dahman, Allison Dalton, Marilyn Dalton, Laura Davis, Anna Ferguson, Sheryl Frye, Jim German, Phyllis German, Abi Higgins, Cassidy Hinkle, Connie Hinkle, Susie Janis, Carol Jones, Tim Marcum, Taylor McArdle, Donna McClure, Paula McDermith, Melissa McMulloch, Sophia McPherson, Trent McPherson, Jerylyne Mumm, Hal Pohl, Sarah Redman, Ginnie Reynolds, Liz Roadcap, Michelle Ross, Kathy Schluter, Sandy Schwartz, Jon Seevers, Veronica Seevers, Adi Sheppard, Cara Stoerger, Bobette Stotts, Norma Strange, Holly Tutich, Kim Vlad, Steve Wadleigh, Jacki Walsh, Kelly Wichus, John Wierschem, Judy Wierschem, Diane Kouzmanoff Williford, Tracy Wiltgen, Candy Woodrum





## THE BACK SHOP

By Kent McClure

Chief Mechanical Officer

Things were a little more normal this past season, for we did operate. Attendance at Railroad Days was off from previous years, but the Fireworks Train and Polar Express were as popular as ever, if not more so. The gift shop broke all previous records for sales during Polar, with many thanks to Carol Jones for all her efforts in stocking and organizing the gift shop, and worrying over our gift shop merchandise that got caught up in the

supply chain problems being experienced by so many companies and individuals. Most of the season, mechanically anyway, was focused on getting Rock Island Coach #2541 completed in time for Polar Express®, with only minimal work being done on other equipment.

**Wabash F7A #1189** - 1189 was in service during the first part of the season, and operated without issue. It then spent the majority of the season out of service accruing out-of-use credit on its air brake components. It was then back in service for Polar.

**ALCO FPA4 #6789** - 6789 was also used for regular service this season, with no issues. Paul Nelson plans on doing some body work to the lower right nose where rust is coming through. This work may keep the locomotive out of service part of the upcoming season.



**Milwaukee Road NW2 #1649** - 1649 was used as well for a turn of regular service, and for random switching moves as needed.

**IC GP11 #8733** - The GP11 has been the primary storage move and charter/throttle time locomotive this past year. It has been trouble free for this year.



**C&M RS1325 #31** - We held this locomotive out of the regular rotation this season to allow Bill Crisp to organize another special throttle time with it as a fund raiser. It was also used during Railroad Days weekend to handle one of the three trains of that event.

**Southern Steam Locomotive #401** - Work on this locomotive was very slow this year, with the boiler interior sandblasted, inspected by the FRA, and the boiler interior painted with a coating intended for use in steam boilers, called Apexior, made by the Dampney Company. It will protect the boiler steel from direct contact with water for the upcoming 15 years of operation. We have also made a new throttle valve spacer which utilizes Teflon o-rings for sealing, and is bolted to the throttle stand pipe. This will simplify removing the throttle valve for annual inspections as we won't have to fumble around with the loose spacer, nuts and washers, all while bent over double to reach the bottom of the bolts that held the assembly together. Now, all but one of the nuts holding the throttle in will be accessed from the top, making this project much simpler and less prone to leaks or other assembly problems, like dropping nuts or washers into the boiler. The new boiler tubes are now being cut to length, but we have not yet started to install them due to the end-of-season rush. (Railroad Days, Polar setup, operation, and teardown.) Work should pick back up on this project this winter, with the intent of having it back in service this coming season.

**Snowplow CP 40065** – The snowplow was completed this past year in time for display during Railroad Days. In order for the car to face south for display, it was turned on the White Heath wye, giving those who worked on the car an opportunity to ride in it during that operation.

**Rock Island Coach #2541** – This car was finished in time for Polar, with the last big project on it being the blasting/painting and reinstallation of the seats, and installation of the new window shades. With the exception of the seat upholstery, walking into the car now is a step back to 1925 when the car was built, with the wood grained interior, and light colored flooring which closely resembles the original floor, based on builder's photos of these cars.



Kent McClure photo

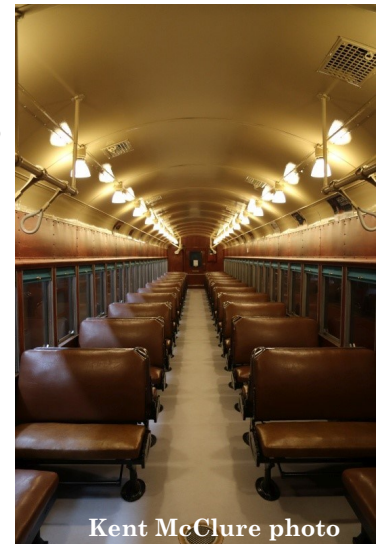
During the first weekend of Polar, the main steam conduit began to fail at a threaded joint under the car, necessitating a mid-week repair which consisted of a new pipe union, approximately two feet of 2" Sch. 80 pipe, and some time to saw out the problem portion of pipe, weld in the new piece, and reassemble that end of the steam piping on the car. While

we had it apart, we took the opportunity to also replace the end-of-car steam valve nearest the problem with a rebuilt unit out of our stock of spares.

**IC Diners 4110 & 4112** - Bruce Backus spent much time in 4110 this past season getting refrigeration working, which required a slightly larger motor on the Pantry refrigerator to get it to operate reliably, and the outright replacement of the unit on the kitchen refrigerator. One of the refrigerators in 4112 required some additional refrigerant to get it to cool fully.

During this past season, MRM has utilized both diners for a dinner train offering during the Fireworks Train, and for another new event, the Donut Train, an early morning train organized by Dylan Cantrell and Daniel Frye. Both events have turned out to be very popular, selling out each time they are offered. More of these events will be planned for the upcoming season, and I suggest you watch the website for dates and times. These additions are very welcome as they help pay for the rebuild, and for the maintenance both of these cars require to keep them in an operational condition.

**Wabash Box Car #47947** - This car is now in the wood car shop, with work planned to replace rotted wood in both the walls and floor, and any steel work required to put the car back in good condition. This car was originally built as part of a group of cars used in hauling finished automobiles and auto parts. Some of this group of cars were equipped with end doors, and some, such as ours, had small overhead cranes in them to facilitate handling the lading in the days before the use of fork lifts. Documentation of this car has been carried out by Brian Jackson of Springfield, who has very carefully measured and documented the car in SolidWorks, in order to produce molds to create models of the car. In his work to do this, he has acquired drawings of this group of cars from IRM's Pullman Library, which he has shared with us to facilitate the car's rebuilding.



Kent McClure photo

This car arrived at MRM in August of 1989, donated by Indiana Transportation Museum. It was part of a large group of these cars which were located at ALCOA of Lafayette, IN., that were donated to ITM. ITM donated this car to MRM as they did not have room for all of them. The donation required the replacement of several wheel sets, repacking of journals, and air brake work. After that work was completed, the car moved on its own wheels from Lafayette to Monticello

**CB&Q Caboose #14042** - Built by the CB&Q in their Aurora, Illinois shops in 1891, this car was purchased from the CB&Q in 1969 by David Knorr, who then donated the car to MRM in 1973, arriving by truck in early December of 1973. This is a unique type of caboose, with the addition of passenger space and seating, typically used by the CB&Q for branch line service. A number of these cars were preserved, primarily due to the number of them the CB&Q kept in service into the 60's. There are currently sister cars at



Kent McClure photo



Kent McClure photo



Kent McClure photo

**Restoration projects start with carefully documenting what is there, with many, many measurements and photographs. Those are then developed into Autocad drawings of the equipment. Here we see David Marshall collecting measurements on CB&Q caboose 14042.**

**Here is a detailed shot of one of the platforms on CB&Q caboose 14042. As you can see, not only is the wood end beam mostly gone, so is the steel reinforcement. This car will be a big job.**

both Illinois Railway Museum, and Mid-Continent in North Freedom, WI, along with a very similar car at the Silver Creek and Stevenson Railroad of Freeport, Illinois, among others. Work on this car is beginning, with careful documentation of what is left by Dave Marshall. Once the initial documentation is complete, careful disassembly will begin, to determine how much original fabric of the car will need to be replaced to put it back into a good condition. It will also likely require complete truck rebuilding due to decay of the wooden members of the trucks.

**Wabash Coach #1238** – This was the next coach in line to be restored, with work starting in earnest this past fall. Bruce Backus is leading this project, and he has had the help of Hal and Carla Pohl, Dennis Slone, Dylan Cantrell, Daniel Frye, and Paul Jones among others. This car will be a big project, as it will require a large amount of interior AND exterior work to bring it back. In the good news side of it, the upholstery work is already done, with the new seats stored in the mezzanine of the new wood car shop. Like other cars here, before we had indoor storage available, the raccoons found ways into this car, and up into the ceiling. Much destruction ensued, the car department saying "EWWWWWWW! YUCK!!" with the end result being we will have to replace the entire ceiling of the car and all the insulation. Please see Dennis Slone's article about this car for more details



**Bruce Backus is seen working on removing ceiling panels in the coach compartment of Wabash 1238.**

**In other news**, more improvements are underway to our facilities, with compressed air plumbing installed in the new wood and wood car shops, utilizing air from the compressor located in the car shop, which supplies air to all the other shop buildings with the exception of the Maintenance of Way building. Syl Keller, Paul Jones, Bruce Backus and Al Strange worked on getting the new system installed.

Work is also proceeding at a slow pace on the turntable project. Electrical lines and gas lines that were in the way of the new turntable lead have now been moved so work on the lead can proceed. The turntable itself will be sandblasted, and end trolleys removed to facilitate repair work on the ends of the turntable structure proper. This past summer saw the completion of soil boring to determine what kind of foundation will be required for the center bearing and the ring rail.

We have also received a donation of \$50,000.00 toward the design, construction/erection/maintenance of a water tower/water treatment system for water for the steam locomotive. We have not yet developed a timeline for this project.

Kent McClure  
CMO





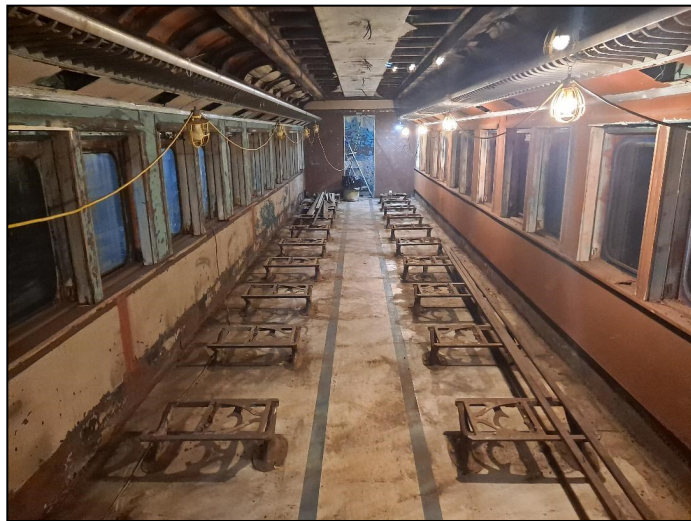
**THE CAR SHOPS**  
By Dennis Slone



**WABASH COACH 1238**  
**WABASH WOODEN BOXCAR 47947**

Wabash 1238 is a heavyweight coach built by American Car & Foundry (ACF)

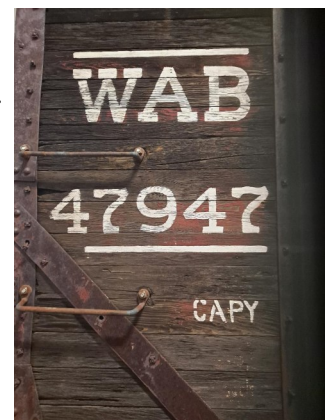
in 1927. This car was built for general service and was used on passenger trains throughout the Wabash system. The car was built as an open-window car, equipped with steam heat and a 32 volt DC electrical system. It's last use on the railroad was on the Orland Park, IL - Chicago, IL commuter train. It was sold to Sol Tick scrapyard in Decatur on 5-14-70. A number of these cars were saved from the scrapyard in the 1980s, but most eventually succumbed to scrapping. The car will be completely rebuilt inside and out. The ceiling in the car has been removed and will be replaced. Wood trim has been carefully removed and will be cleaned and restored for reuse after the new ceiling has been installed. Seats had been removed for restoration years ago, and about half of the interior walls sandblasted. The rest of the interior paint will be removed by stripping. The car has a restroom at each end, and parts of the restroom floor will require replacement. New



fixtures will be installed in the restrooms as needed. Steam heat will be replaced by electric heat. The car will be completely rewired and a modern air conditioning system installed. The exterior of the car will require some rusted areas to be cut out and new steel welded in. The car will receive new glass and gaskets for the windows and the exterior will be sandblasted before painting back into Wabash colors. Estimated time for completion of this car is 4-5 years. Upon completion this car will be next to enter the Museum's Polar Express consist.

Wabash boxcar 47947 was built in 1927 by AC&F.

The car featured wood sides and a wood floor supported with a steel frame. With double doors this car was primarily used for transferring automobile parts between manufacturing plants. It has yet to be determined if all of the wood will be replaced or only the rotted boards will be replaced on the car. The metal on the car will be sandblasted and the entire car will be repainted and lettered for the Wabash. The car will be used on the museums freight trains. A time frame for completion of this car has not been determined as work on CB&Q wooden caboose #14042, also in the wood car shop, is also seeing work this winter.



L C L  
(LESS THAN CARLOAD)



Fall Sunset Dinner Train

On October 2nd, patrons had the opportunity to ride in style in one of the museum's restored Illinois Central dining cars to enjoy a delicious three-course dinner and of course enjoy the fall scenery of Central Illinois. During the two-hour train ride, passengers were served a choice of Herb Crusted Tenderloin (gluten free), Pecan Chicken, or Primavera Pasta, sides, and homemade pie, all served on real china, setting on fine linen. This excellent meal was prepared and served by Holly's Country Kitchen of Monticello. This event was deemed a success as seating in both cars were filled to capacity with satisfied customers. A tip O' the hat and a hardy slap on the back to Chairman Dylan Cantrell for a job well done!!

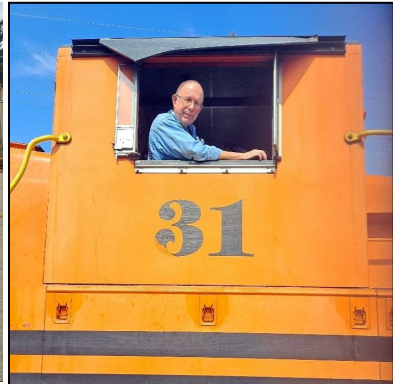


The Donut Train

The Donut Train was a huge success this year and is a very popular event for families. Dates in July, August, September and October were sold out. Guests rode in one the Museum's restored Illinois Central dining cars and each table had a box of one dozen of Industrial Donut's finest assortment of donuts to enjoy during the approximately one-hour long train ride.



**RAILROAD DAYS TAKES PEOPLE TO MAKE IT WORK!**



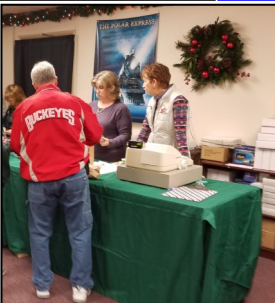
**IT IS PEOPLE THAT MAKES THE POLAR EXPRESS RUN !!**



Rob Doyle photo



John Capodice photo



MONTICELLO  
RAILWAY MUSEUM  
P O BOX 401  
MONTICELLO, ILLINOIS 61856

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM

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**ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES**



**TENTATIVE STEAM SCHEDULE**

401 in Steam: Ride behind our restored 1907-vintage steam locomotive!  
May: 21-22   June: 11-12   July: 16-17   August: 20-21  
September: 17-18   October: 1-2

**Annual Membership Meeting**: April 9th

**Spring Training**: April 9th and 10th

**Spring Throttle Time**: April: 23d

**Opening Weekend**: April 30th

**Donut Train**: April 30

**School Days**: May: 3d and 11th

**Mothers Day**: May: 7 th and 8th

**Fathers Day**: June: 18th and 19th

**Fireworks Train**: July: 3d

**Railroad Days**: September: - 17th and 18th

**Fall Throttle Time**: October: - 8th

**The Polar Express™ and Lunch With Santa**: To Be Announced

