

The BN

Expediter

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The official publication of *The Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad*, the historical society focused on the Burlington Northern Railroad, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, and the BNSF Railway.



BN's LMX locomotives were first delivered in 1987 with minimal red paint, then modified about a year later to increase their visibility. These two photos show the left and right sides of the units in the as-delivered paint scheme. The 8500 was in Kansas City, Missouri on December 16, 1987. The photo was taken by Lon Coone. The photo of the 8502 was taken in December 1987 by G. J. Bolinsky, location unknown. Both photos are from the Keith Ardinger collection.



Cover Photo: LMX 8576 along with an unidentified sibling lead a westbound manifest at Trident, MT on a beautiful fourth of July morning in 1989. To the left is the Holcim Trident cement plant, and to the right is the Missouri River. Photo by Keith Ardinger.

Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad

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The Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad (FOBNR) was formed to gather, preserve, and share information about the history, current operations, and future development of the Burlington Northern Railroad and its successors. It follows the evolution of the railroad from its inception in 1970 with the merger of the Great Northern; Northern Pacific; Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy; and the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroads. We are a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation

The purpose of the FOBNR is educational. We wish to perpetuate the history of the Burlington Northern Railroad and its successors. We seek to collect and preserve any materials which help establish or illustrate the life, conditions, events, and activities of the railroad. We will disseminate this information through the publication of a newsletter, establishment of a web site, by maintaining an archive, and by conducting an annual convention somewhere along the lines operated by the railroad. We may also publish information in other media and may restore and operate historical railway equipment.

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The BN Expediter

The BN Expediter is published four times a year and is included with membership in the Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad. Manuscripts, photographs and information are welcome for publication. Materials are submitted with the understanding that no monetary compensation will be paid upon publication. Items will be returned only if requested. Otherwise they will go into the archives.

Anything published in The BN Expediter (including the classifieds), must be focused on the Burlington Northern Railroad and its successors, from the 1970 merger on. Information and/or pictures that give historical perspective or context are acceptable (e.g., premerger road numbers). The disposition of a locomotive, other piece of equipment or property is also acceptable. Further information is available from the Editor.

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2014 FOBNR Convention and Membership Meeting

Tulsa, OK

June 18-21, 2014

More information in the January issue.

Corrections

The two photos on Page 2 of the July 2013 issue were incorrectly attributed to James C. Harold from the Mark A. Perry collection. They actually were taken by Carl Gay and are from the Andrew Renaud collection."

The date of the upper photo should be June 20, 1970.

"The location of the lower photo should be Winnipeg.

We're Looking for a New Editor!

After several years of service to the Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad, Kris Johnson has decided to move on and has resigned as editor of The BN Expediter. We thank Kris for all the hours he has put in so that the rest of us can enjoy our quarterly publication.

Dave Poplawski, who was the editor for the first few years of the FOBNR's existence, has taken over as interim editor until a new, permanent one is found.

We are looking for someone with a basic knowledge of the BN and BNSF and some experience with collecting and organizing information for a newsletter. Experience with some modern desktop publishing software would be nice, but if none then the design and layout of each issue will be outsourced. The editor receives a financial honorarium for each issue, with the amount depending on whether the editor also does the layout.

If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Dave Poplawski at pop@mtu.edu. The search for a new editor will continue until the job is filled.

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Burlington Northern Locomotive Chronicles 1987

Two major events highlighted the locomotive activities of the Burlington Northern in 1987. One was the delivery of 67 GE B39-8E's and the other was the spin-off of the Montana Rail Link and the associated sale of over 50 locomotives to the fledgling operation. The sale and scrapping of many older units also continued as in previous years.

The 69 LMXs delivered in 1987 were the first of a 100 unit order, with the remaining units coming the following year. The units were leased from General Electric in the same way as the Oakway SD60's were in 1986 - *power by the hour*. Union complaints about how the units would be maintained were solved by having BN union craftsmen do the work with supervision by GE personnel. The units were based in Lincoln, Nebraska for this purpose.

The B39-8E was a 3,900 horsepower 4-axle locomotive. It was based on the B39-8 that tested on the Santa Fe, but with a few *enhancements* (hence the E in its designation). Those enhancements were the removal of the widening of the long hood about 2/3 of the way back from the cab, a flat top on the cab instead of a curved top, slanted bottoms on the flaired radiator wings, fewer hood openings and a cleaner arrangement. They were assigned to every kind of road freight service, and were quickly found working all over the system.

The units came painted gray with a wide white stripe with narrow red stripe in the middle of the white stripe (see color photos on page 2). Their paint scheme was modified about a year later by adding large areas of red paint on the nose to increase their visibility (photos to appear in the 1988 installment of the BN Locomotive Chronicles).

The really big event of 1987 on the BN was the sale/lease of a major portion of the ex-NP trackage in Montana and a small amount in Idaho to the newly formed Montana Rail Link. A significant aspect was that the expansive ex-NP Livingston locomotive shop complex was also taken over by the MRL, becoming its primary locomotive heavy maintenance site for many years. This loss to the BN meant that a large number of locomotives that had been assigned to Livingston as their primary maintenance location had to be reassigned.

This major divestiture had only a minor effect on the BN locomotive roster because only 53 locomotives were sold to the MRL for its initial roster. In comparison, 196 units were sold off to other railroads, leasing companies or scrapping companies.

An interesting coincidence between the LMX units and

New Units

GE B39-8E	8500-8566	Painted for LMX
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the MRL was that on the MRL's first day of operation two LMX units and one SD40-2 were turned loose unmanned from Livingston up the Bozeman Pass. They accelerated all the way -up the hill, then once over the pass picked up so much speed that they derailed and came to a rest on their side on a curve in the middle of the West End siding (see photo at right). Vandalism was suspected but nobody was every caught. The two units, which weren't even a month old at the time, were replaced with new units in early 1988. The wrecked units were repaired and returned to the lease fleet with different numbers later in 1988.

As mentioned earlier, many units left the roster in 1987, with some going to the MRL and many more to various other places. In some cases the last units of certain models left the roster, including the single U30CB and SD40B, the U28B's, the U33C's, the SDP45's and the F45's.

In other locomotive news, after receiving cab damage, SW10 #442 was rebuilt into a cabless SW10B in January by the shop forces in West Burlington, Iowa and mated with another switcher for duties at the Galesburg, Illinois yard.

The B32-8 demonstrator units, numbers 5497-5499, which had been operating together since their arrival, were separated in the late spring and operated independently from then on. SD60 demonstrators 8300-8302 were returned to their leaser in December. SD40C (Caterpillar engine) 6330

Units Sold to MRL

Model	Numbers
NW12	19, 203
SW12	208, 215, 216, 218, 220
SW9	269
GP9	1710, 1721, 1725, 1729, 1731, 1732, 1744, 1831 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1903, 1904, 1924, 1925 1926, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1934, 1935, 1946
SD9	6111
SD40	6301, 6306, 6307, 6308, 6310, 6312, 6315, 6316 6317, 6320, 6322, 6324, 6335, 6336, 6337, 6341 6344, 6345, 6346, 6347

Less than a month old, two LMX's (8503/8540) wound up wrecked along with an SD40-2 (6377) about half way down West End siding, just west of the Bozeman tunnel, as a result of a possible act of vandalism on the first day of operation of the MRL. October 31, 1987. Photo by Larry Zeuschel.



was sent to Alliance, Nebraska in February and was modified to work with fuel tenders and to have automatic flange lube equipment installed, then was sent to EMD for evaluation in December. GP35 2555 was sent to the NTSB Accident Safety Research Facility in Oklahoma City.

To keep up with the demand to move freight, BN leased locomotives from other railroads in 1987. This included 19 Denver and Rio Grand Western SD45's, 20 Kyle (ex-Conrail) GP40's and nine Missouri Pacific GP38-2's.

1987 was another interesting and active year for BN's locomotive fleet. Coming up in 1988: more LMX's, the beginnings of a major rebuilding program eventually involving 39 GP30's, GP35's and GP40's, and of course the sale of more old and tired units.

Information for this article came from Bob Del Grosso's *Burlington Northern Locomotive Directory* 1992 and *Burlington Northern 1980-1990 Annual*, issues 86 and 87 of *Extra 2200 South, Power-by-the-hour: A Rail Success Story*, from the April 16th, 1989 edition of *The Chicago Tribune*, by Bob Wiedrich, and *Diesel Era*, Vol 9, #1 (Jan/Feb 1998).

B39-8E Specifications

Horsepower.....	3,900
Weight	280,000 lbs
Length	66 ft 4 in
Width	10 ft 2 3/4 in
Height.....	14 ft 1 1/2 in
Fuel Capacity	3240 gal
Sand Capacity	48 cu ft
Cooling System	380 gal
Lubricating Oil	410 gal
Prime Mover	FDL-16
Alternator	GMG 186
Traction Motor	752 AG
Gear Ratio.....	83:20
Starting Tractive Effort	70,000 lbs
Continuous Tractive Effort.....	60,000 lbs
Maximum Speed	70 MPH
Minimum Continuous Speed.....	18 MPH

Units Leaving the Roster

Model	Number	Disposition			
NW12	1	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5329	St. Louis Auto Shredding
SW7	77	Sperry Rail Services	U28B	5450	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	115	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5451	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	117	Precision National Corp.		5453	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	144	PLM		5454	St. Louis Auto Shredding
SW12	187	Titan Railway Services		5455	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	219	Titan Railway Services		5456	St. Louis Auto Shredding
SW9	266	Pielet Brothers Brothers		5458	St. Louis Auto Shredding
SW10	578	Naporano Iron & Metal		5459	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP5	1352	St. Louis Auto Shredding	U30B	5471	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1357	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5472	Chrome Crankshaft
GP10	1404	National Railway Equipment		5473	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1405	National Railway Equipment		5474	Southwestern Railroad Car Parts
	1415	National Railway Equipment		5476	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP9	1714	Donated LC&S RR		5479	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1762	Precision National Corp.		5480	Pielet Brothers Brothers
	1775	G&M RR		5483	Pielet Brothers Brothers
	1784	Scrapped		5484	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1803	Wilson Railway	U33C	5725	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1807	D&I RR		5728	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1850	Precision National Corp.		5729	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1901	D&I RR		5730	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1918	Donated LC&S RR		5731	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1939	Precision National Corp.		5732	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1957	Wilson Railway		5733	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	1967	Precision National Corp.		5735	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP20	2005	Precision National Corp.		5737	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2016	Indiana Hi Rail		5738	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2045	Precision National Corp.		5739	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2050	Precision National Corp.		5741	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2060	Precision National Corp.		5742	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2066	Wilson Railway		5743	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP30	2229	Precision National Corp.		5744	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2244	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5749	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2247	Precision National Corp.		5750	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2252	Indiana Hi Rail		5751	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP35	2508	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5753	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2527	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5754	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2543	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5755	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2550	Wilson Railway		5759	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	2552	Southwestern Railroad Car Parts		5760	St. Louis Auto Shredding
GP40	3013	National Railway Equipment		5762	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	3036	National Railway Equipment	U30B	5763	St. Louis Auto Shredding
U28CB	4510	Precision National Corp.		5765	St. Louis Auto Shredding
U30C	5307	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5770	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	5308	Precision National Corp.		5771	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	5309	Erwin Howell/Erman Corp.		5772	Pielet Brothers Brothers
	5312	St. Louis Auto Shredding		5773	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	5313	Precision National Corp.		5774	Chrome Locomotive
	5314	Precision National Corp.		5776	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	5315	Precision National Corp.		5778	Southwestern Railroad Car Parts
	5316	Precision National Corp.		5778	St. Louis Auto Shredding
	5317	Precision National Corp.	U30C	5814	Carl Weissman and Sons
	5319	St. Louis Auto Shredding	SD9	6182	Wilson Railway
	5323	Precision National Corp.		6188	Wilson Railway
	5324	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6205	Wilson Railway
	5328	Precision National Corp.	SD40	6314	National Railway Equipment
				6338	National Railway Equipment
				6340	EMD
			SD45	6400	Azcon Corp.

6405	VMV Enterprises, Inc.		6564	Azcon Corp.
6411	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6565	St. Louis Auto Shredding
6417	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6566	Azcon Corp.
6418	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6567	Pielet Brothers Brothers
6420	VMV Enterprises, Inc.		6570	Pielet Brothers Brothers
6421	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6572	Pielet Brothers Brothers
6425	St. Louis Auto Shredding	SDP45	6593	Pielet Brothers Brothers
6428	Azcon Corp.		6594	Azcon Corp.
6435	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6596	Azcon Corp.
6436	Azcon Corp.		6597	Pielet Brothers
6445	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6599	Precision National Corp.
6494	Pielet Brothers Brothers	F45	6641	Morrison-Knudsen
6496	Azcon Corp.		6643	Morrison-Knudsen
6497	Azcon Corp.		6645	Morrison-Knudsen
6543	Pielet Brothers Brothers	SD45	6655	Pielet Brothers
6544	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6659	Soo Line Railroad
6545	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6660	Pielet Brothers
6546	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6662	St. Louis Auto Shredding
6547	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6663	St. Louis Auto Shredding
6548	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6664	Pielet Brothers
6549	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6667	Pielet Brothers
6550	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6668	St. Louis Auto Shredding
6551	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6671	Wilson Railway
6552	Soo Line Railroad		6675	Precision National Corp.
6553	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6678	Soo Line Railroad
6554	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6680	Precision National Corp.
6555	Azcon Corp.		6683	VMV Enterprises, Inc.
6556	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6686	Azcon Corp.
6557	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6689	Azcon Corp.
6558	Azcon Corp.		6690	Azcon Corp.
6559	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6691	St. Louis Auto Shredding
6560	Pielet Brothers Brothers		6692	Azcon Corp.
6561	St. Louis Auto Shredding		6695	Pielet Brothers Brothers
6562	St. Louis Auto Shredding	SD40B	7600	Precision National Corp.
6563	St. Louis Auto Shredding			



SW10 442 was rebuilt at West Burlington into an SW10B in January 1987 after suffering cab damage. Galesburg, Illinois on July 18, 1992. Photo by Jim Shepard, from the Keith Ardinger collection.

The Last of their Kind

Models completely purged from the roster in 1987.



(above) U30CB 4500 was the only U30C converted into a B unit, back in 1981 after being in a wreck. It originally was given number 800B, but was soon renumbered 4500. It was retired, stripped for parts and then sold to Precision National Corp. in 1987. Shown here in Kansas City, Missouri on June 25, 1984. Photo by Paul Wester from the Keith Ardinger collection.

(below) U28B 5450 was one of eight of that model sold to St. Louis Auto Shredding in 1987. These eight units were the last of their model designation on the railroad. The unit, with cab windows covered and exhaust stack capped, was in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 15, 1985. Photo by Jim Shepard, from the Keith Ardinger collection.





(above) BN disposed of all its remaining U33C's in 1987. Unit 5762 represents one of that group, shown here Seattle, Washington on May 6, 1977. Photo by Keith Ardinger.

(below) Number 6599 was the most unusual SDP45 on BN's roster. EMD replaced the rear 3-axle truck with an experimental 4-axle radial guide self-steering truck in 1984. The original truck was put back in early 1987, after which this unit and all remaining SDP45's on the roster were retired and sold. Auburn, Washington, September 16, 1984. Photo by Scott O'Dell, from the Keith Ardinger collection.





(above) BN's roster of F45's were used for many things, including helper service on Marias pass. The 6645 is waiting in Essex, Montana for it's next assignment in September, 1979. This unit represents one of the last group of F45's to be disposed of. Photo by Keith Ardinger.

(below) SD40B 7600 was rebuilt from SD40 6302 and the only SD40 to be so converted. It lasted 6 years after being rebuilt in 1981 until being retired and sold to Precision National Corp. who soon sold it to the Soo line where it lived on until 2004. Pasco, Washington, August, 1986. Photo by Keith Ardinger.



Book Review by Larry Stephens

BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD BRANCH LINES: THE NEBRASKA EXPERIENCE

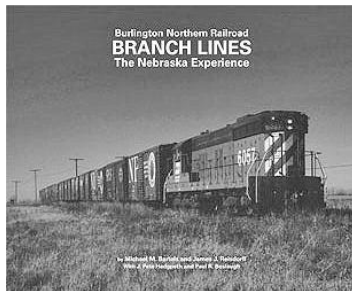
By Michael M. Bartels and James J. Reisdorff
with J. Pete Hedgpeth and Paul R. Boslaugh

The Burlington Northern inherited the extensive branch line operations of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy in southeast Nebraska at the time of the 1970 merger. The authors explain how these branch lines were operated during the late 1950s era by the Burlington Route, and again during the Burlington Northern era of the 1970s and 1980s. 14 Branch lines are covered with descriptions of operations on each branch as well as historical data on the date of abandonment or discontinuance of local train service. Most photographs are of branch line locals powered by various motors including U30Cs, Oakway SD60s and Geeps, but mostly SD9s. The numerous photographs of line-side structures, such as decaying stations and depots, illustrate some of the effects of the decline in branch line service. There is a chapter on BN's operating practices and another on the CB&Q's operating practices in the 1950's.

A highlight of the book is "'Braking' on the CB&Q Branch Lines of the 1960s" by co-author J. Pete Hedgpeth. This chapter provides a first-hand account of what it was like to work on these branch lines. The excellent photographs, the vast amount of data in each chapter and this first person chapter provide the reader with a very comprehensive picture of branch line service.

A map shows the locations of more than 80 stations. Because there are so many stations some are named on the map and 45 are indexed below the map. A smaller map shows the remaining lines as of 2013. This map has fewer than 30 stations listed, which is testament to the decline of branch line service.

The book contains 95 rare and large format photographs, most in color.



80 pages, 8 1/2 " X 9 3/4 " softcover.

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Building an HO LMX B39-8E

by Wade Griffis (photos on page 16)

During the summer of 1988 I was able to visit Eola, Illinois. While I was there several trains arrived led by the new LMX locomotives. I took as many pictures as I could, hoping to be able to model these engines someday. Luck was with me as body shells for the B39-8E's would soon be available from Rail Power Products.

The RRP shells were sold as 8-40B's, which I didn't find out until later were basically the same unit with a little more horsepower. As things went along, RRP started offering the 8-40B and a special built frame, and that allowed the fairly easy modeling of these units.

I purchased 2 shell and frame sets and set about building a couple B39-8Es. For the era in which these shells were produced they were very well done. As better die making processes were introduced, shells have gotten better. The major improvement is in the area of the body doors. Older dies usually represent the body doors as being on the outside of the body, whereas newer die work gets the doors set flush with the body work.

When I built these units a lot of the now common detail parts weren't being produced, so many of my parts were built using brass wire – the handrails, windshield wipers, and nose grab holds were all fabricated. The LMX units use GE's FB-2 truck side frames. I don't know whose frames I used anymore, but they were made to fit normal Athearn "B" trucks. I used a Mashima can motor to power both my units. They have given excellent service and draw far less power than the old open frame motors that used to be Athearn's standard.

Pictures of the unit you are going to build are important as some details changed over the years. The LMX units did not come with ditch lights, and it seems not all units got the same type as the LMX fleet was up-graded over the years. The model pictures shown here have ditch lights even on the original paint scheme. I am not sure that ever really happened as the original scheme only lasted until July of 1989.

If you are interested in building one of the LMX units, the shells and the frame are still available. Arrow Hobby (a division of Proto – Power West) bought up the remaining shells and as of 8/2013 still shows them on their web site - ppp-aline@att.net. Item numbers are: #509-8-40B (shell), #R115-8-40B (frame). They have pre-bent handrail sets, GE FB-2 side frames, windshield wiper sets and items to help you build a really nice unit.

The biggest problem in building a unit now is finding decals to letter your engine. Microscale once produced decals, but their new listing does not show them. The Microscale item number was 87-520.

The other source of LMX units is Atlas – they produced several unit numbers, but they were released many years ago (October 2000) and more recently in October of 2006.

2013 Missoula Convention Report

by John Adams

Our first convention “off the property” was completed last Saturday evening. For this year’s convention we met on the Montana Rail Link in Missoula, Montana. We felt this was reasonable because this actually had been BN territory, and watching the MRL was actually like watching BNSF with a smattering of MRL blue.

Our meeting started with registration at Ruby’s Inn, our convention hotel. As usual Dave Poplawski did a stellar job on organizing all of us. After we all were registered we headed to Famous Dave’s for a nice dinner. After dinner we returned to the hotel and had our opening session. We were fortunate enough to have the services and knowledge of Alan Burns, a retired MRL engineer who the railroad had suggested we contact. Alan had started his career working for the Milwaukee as a brakeman and then engineer. He then went to Colorado University to get his bachelor’s degree. After finishing college he joined the BN in Alliance, Nebraska in the early years of Powder River Basin coal, watching the CB&Q backwater transition into a major coal artery. With the cyclic nature of railroading in the late 80’s he realized he was going to be furloughed and heard about new opportunities on the MRL. Joining the railroad on opening day, he continued with the railroad until his retirement 2 years ago. Alan was able to give us an excellent history of the area, and had a presentation he had given to the Milwaukee Road Historical Association about the central focus of Butte on Montana railroading. He described all the railroads and personalities that surrounded this mining hub with railroads and was able to tell us how MRL fits into the modern evolution of Montana railroading. After that we were able to stay around to see some slides of BN in Washington State in the 70’s until we all collapsed to bed.

Thursday morning started with breakfast and then a short trip to MRL Headquarters down the street. We were greeted by the very hospitable people of the MRL HQ and given some introductory remarks by Paul Elsenpeter, who would provide us a tour of the Car Shops and be our Banquet speaker later that evening. After this we were taken in 2 groups to tour the dispatching center, where dispatchers at the 3 desks control all of the MRL trains. Our tour guide was the Assistant Dispatcher, who related to us that her start in railroading was on CSX where she began as one of 700 applicants, which was whittled down after several interviews to 30 being hired, of whom 7 finished the program. We then were able to get our group picture at an ex-BN MRL caboose and head for the Car Shops. Paul had stopped all work in the shops to let us tour without PPE and we were able to see the 3 track car shop. They were justifiably proud of the organization of the shop which made it a safe and efficient environment. They were working on a Radio Control Caboose, several covered hoppers and a coal hopper as we toured, but they have worked on articulated double stack cars and Autoracks as well. The shop was more impressive as we learned that they had used the input from the workers to make the area much more efficient.

After that we headed for lunch and many of us hit a well stocked local hobby shop, which was less well stocked when we left. We then headed for Stevensville, MT and the home layout of Kirk Thompson. On arrival we found an ex-CB&Q wood caboose (complete with wood trucks) that he had on the property for guests and relatives to stay in during visits. He also had built a beautiful depot to house his layout, which featured an HO scale model of the MRL from Helena, across the Skyline trestle and Mullan Pass and on to Mis-





(above) Most of the group gathered for our annual group photo in front of caboose-turned-residence that is parked behind MRL's headquarters building in Missoula. The ex-NP/BN caboose has been converted to an office and sleeping room for guy who kind of manages the business car fleet and does lots of other tasks for Mr Washington.

soula staging. His track and signals were all complete, as was the CTC control system and he is now at the scenery stage. He was able to run several trains for us, and they ran extremely well. The highlight certainly was a BNSF loaded coal train, complete with mid-train MRL SD70ACe helpers.

As we returned from this, we met for our Annual Banquet. After a buffet dinner, we listened to, and watched, a presentation by Paul Elsenpeter about his family background with railroading, moving into his personal story and then how he came from the BNSF to work for MRL. We were also able to see some pictures of the new MRL Business Train, as well as obtain much information about the railroad.

Everyone was certainly interested to learn that the 12 "new" SD70ACe's have already paid for themselves in fuel savings, and that more really new locomotives are on the way. He also shared how important continuing the pursuit of technology is for the railroad to make the entire railroad more efficient and safe. After that we had our annual Auction, highlighted by a clock donated by Peter Ferch and a beautiful blanket donated by MRL. With these highlights (and system maps of Alabama and Arkansas railroads on the other extreme) we were able to raise over \$140.

On Friday morning we met bright and early to head for our day on Mullan Pass. Alan had agreed to get us train

(below) In the "you never know what will turn up" department is a BNSF fire train that passed through town. According to the web site www.qstation.org/BNSF_Fire_Flatcar, "It (the pump car) comes equipped with three 3250 gallon water tanks, one 500 gallon AFFF (Foam) tank, 2 Honda pumps, 1 Honda generator to power various lights for night fire fights and 2 movable water cannons on either side of the car located up in the baskets." Gary Seymour created this "stitched" shot from two separate photos he took on June 22nd in Missoula.



line-ups, which despite several work windows, promised an excellent day of train watching. We headed off in car pools, making a number of stops to let Alan share with us some of the interesting and historical sites along the way. By noon, and several trains, we made it to the tunnel, ate box lunches from the hotel, and settled in to watch several meets west of the tunnel. As the afternoon wore on we were able to see more freights, and watch the helpers cut off and head back to the east. As they went they stopped near one of our members taking pictures and I was quite worried the crew might be upset that we were too close to the track - but no, they knew Alan and were sharing news and jokes.

Friday evening was dinner on our own, as people had made it back from the Pass by different routes. We then met for the Membership meeting, where we discussed a number of issues. Many excellent suggestions were heard from the members and discussed at the Board meeting which followed. We also discussed the issue of needing a new editor for the Expediter, and our ongoing need for material to place in the magazine. Once again we attempted to encourage members to share their information about the BN and BNSF. The stories of present and past employees would be particularly welcome, but also modeling articles would be particularly welcome. Even if you just have pictures with some type of captions please send them along. The subsequent Board actions included re-election of officers and a decision to increase our use of social media by the organization. We

also voted to hold the 2014 Convention in Tulsa, and will work for it to be on the weekend after Father's day again next year. We also discussed a policy for evaluating our retained finances, as well as a possible program to pay for some articles for the Expediter. Since we no longer have an editor for the Expediter, Dave Poplawski has offered to do the October Convention issue and Kent Charles offered to do the January issue while we look for a new editor. Certainly they will both be looking for material for the Expediter.

Unfortunately, Friday evening ended on a down note with the news that there were 5 coal cars on the ground just west of the tunnel, closing the railroad completely - and with Saturday set for train watching!

Saturday dawned with the news that they were coming close to reopening the Pass and that there were several trains between Missoula and Sandpoint that could be found on our target for Saturday morning - Evaro Hill. Alan once again got us a line-up and we were off! We were able to catch several trains, and visit some great spots.

A number of us headed back to Missoula on the word that a J train was on its way. J trains are Boeing parts, often 737 fuselages. Soon after lunch it did appear, right behind the loaded coal train minus 5 cars, but unfortunately it was only 2 enclosed parts cars. None the less there was much interest in the short consist as an eminently interesting modeling project, so a number of members took off for Evaro Hill

again to get more photos. Given that our N scale layout tour had had to cancel we all had a free afternoon to catch trains.

By evening we all returned to the hotel. Pizza and pop were brought in with an opportunity for a number of members to share pictures they had taken during the convention, which was enjoyed by all. By 9 PM everyone was tired and off we went, planning to meet again in Tulsa next June.

(left) This BNSF (ex-BN) coal hopper was getting some truck work during our tour on June 20th. The carshop was amazingly neat and clean, and the workers were given a couple of hours off (with pay) while we were there. Photo by Kent Charles.





(above) BNSF 9185 leads a manifest into the MRL yard in Missoula with the old NP depot in the background. June 2013.
Photo by Kent Charles.

(below) H-SPOGAL1-20A finishing the climb east at Blossburg and just about to head into the Mullen Tunnel. June, 2013.
Photo by Mark Steenwyk.





HO Scale LMX B39-8E

As-delivered paint scheme

Custom built by Wade Griffis
(see article on page 11)

