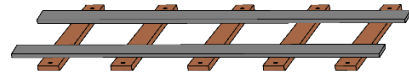


# On Track



Vol 3, Number 2, February 2024

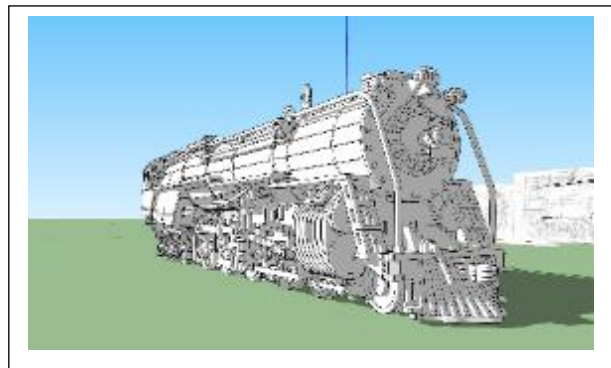
If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, welcome to the fold! We continue to catalog our visitor logs and your name and email appeared! If you wish to be taken off our list, just let us know, but we hope that you will stay with us, follow us online, and return as a visitor sometime soon. **Additional financial support will never be turned down (maintaining and operating a steam locomotive is expensive)!** Previous editions of this newsletter may be found on our [website](#). If you have comments on the newsletter, please send them to [nmheritagerail@nmheritagerail.com](mailto:nmheritagerail@nmheritagerail.com) or to your humble editor, [John Taylor](#).

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

**Current Status:** We are working to determine our 2024 event plans. There are a few outings in the planning stages, and we are still working on the details. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual New Mexico Railroad Days is on that we are working to coordinate (it's a lot of work!). Stay tuned as these plans develop. Our newly elected VP, Matt Casford, is working with John Howard to determine the requirements and cost to install a full PTC system on 2926. Although we have the LeapTC system installed, there are difficulties finding host railroads willing to make the required modifications to their locomotives to make the necessary connections. Therefore, we are pursuing this new path. Again, stay turned!



In other exciting news, I ask you to check out [R.Duck Locomotives Works](#). Why you ask? Because we entered into an agreement with R.Duck and provided them with drawings and photographs to produce a to-scale, laser-cut wooden model of 2926. From the CAD-drawing updates we've seen on R.Duck's Instagram page (example shown), it's looking spectacular! The models will be for sale at [R.Duck's Etsy store](#), and we will have some to sell at our restoration-site store.



**What's up with 2926:** The boiler inlet check valves and the injector valve were inspected and found to have been damaged from stainless-steel wires (apparently released from earlier cleaning efforts using high-speed wire wheels) being trapped between the mating valve seats. The crew is working to repair these parts. The rebuilding and repair of the oil burner continues with slow but steady progress. The hand brake chain on the tool/support car is being relocated to not interfere with the electrical components we were required to install. Finally, the main boiler pressure gauge has been recalibrated.



Boiler check valves



Boiler inlet diffuser



Burner



Support car brake chain drive



Main steam pressure gauge

### Accomplishments:

Mountain States Construction just finished laying new tracks through a portion of our restoration site. The old track and ties were removed and replaced with heavier track and new ties, ballast, rail plates and clips, and the radius of curvature was reduced to help 2926 navigate the curve between the engine house and the edge of the service pit. The first movement, pulled by the ShuttleMover (better known as Lurch), over the new track looks like these changes made a big improvement in how 2926 traverses that section. For those of you who are local, check out our advertisement in the New Mexico Department of Tourism's "True Adventure Guide" and online look for our "Spotlight" ad we are sponsoring on their website (<https://www.newmexico.org/plan/guide/>). On January 21<sup>st</sup>, a small contingent of board members were invited to the Albuquerque Historical Society's monthly meeting where NMHR was presented with a framed "Accolade" certificate for our work preserving a piece of Albuquerque history.

**Capital Outlay Corner:** We finally made progress on spending the \$200,000 from the Governor and plans are in motion to replace the track from the city's property line to the edge of the turntable (see the image). NMHR, along with the help of our awesome lobbyist, Kooch Jacobus, are now working to secure 2024 Legislative Capital Outlay funds for continued restoration and improvements related to the south Rail Yards. The fiscal agent for these funds will be Bernalillo County, as opposed to the City of Albuquerque.



One of the unexpected joys of working with government entities is that NMHR is required to have a harassment prohibition policy in place. That policy was enacted at the start of this new year. That means that every member who comes to our work sites, no matter the frequency, is required to read and sign a letter acknowledging their acceptance and understanding. Failure to do so will result in the revocation of the privilege of working at our sites. So, if you come to either of our sites and haven't done this, please find a board member and ask about it. Your work privileges will be restored immediately upon signing the acceptance letter. Thank you.

**One more item for the local membership.** We will be having a group membership dinner at Buca di Beppo on Saturday, 24 February from 4:00 to 6:00 PM and the cost is \$40/person. The menu is Bread and Salad, Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Baked Ziti, Chicken Parmigiana, mini-Chocolate-chip Cannoli, and coffee/tea/soft drinks/water (alcoholic beverages are available separately). Tickets are available at the restoration site store or through this [PayPal](#) link and will not be available at the door. If you would like to go, please purchase a ticket no later than Friday, 16 February. – See you there!



This wouldn't be a proper newsletter if we didn't ask for your financial help supporting projects like the trackwork and the upcoming PTC install. The track work was many tens of thousands and the PTC will be even more, so please consider donating to help us cover these not insignificant costs. Thank you!

**Profile of a member:** For the last year-and-a-half or so we've all noticed the tall, lanky guy with the soft southern drawl, the almost-military formality, and the biggest CAN-DO/WILL-DO attitude of anyone on the site. That guy could only be Warren Bowers.

Warren was born in Chicago and went to Bartlett High School in Memphis, Tennessee. He acquired an early love for trains riding the Illinois Central and the Burlington railroads to junior high track meets (hurdles, mile relay, 440 relay) and riding back and forth between Chicago and Memphis. He decided to forego his promising track career during high school, working instead in a local warehouse. After high school he attended Memphis Hospital School of Nursing where he earned his BS and RN degrees after only three years in 1980.

Despite an already-distinguished academic career, Warren was far from done with academia. He attended Penn State where he obtained a certification as a cardiovascular perfusionist (say that three times fast!), focusing on operating heart-lung machines during open heart



surgery, including heart transplants. And as if that weren't enough, he went on to the Toronto Sick Children's Hospital where he further specialized in pediatric and neo-natal heart-lung procedures.

He plied his craft for five years in Raleigh, North Carolina, and for another 12 years here in Albuquerque, working for both the Presbyterian and Lovelace systems and eventually ending up as a risk manager for Lovelace. He retired in April 2022 and came to us in October 2022 through the good graces of our local FRA representative, Dan Lucero, after attending one of our fabulous open houses.

Warren and his wife, Vicki, met while they were both working as nurses in Memphis and have been married for 43 years. They have been horse folks for a long time, although they are down to just one who is presently boarded at a stable in Corrales (Warren notes that horses can afford to live in Corrales, but people can't!). When not cleaning stalls or banging on the 2926, Warren enjoys touring on his BMW motorcycle.

So, if you need something (in fact, anything) done, or you just want a new mitral valve or full heart replacement, just check in with Warren—I'm told that he keeps a heart-lung machine in the trunk of his car just in case! I'm also told that he now can distinguish between boiler check valves and mitral valves!

**How does it work:** After a discussion of the 480 KV generator in our support car which will supply power to all the train cars we are pulling, one of our thoughtful members sent us a note asking how early passenger cars received their electrical power. Of course, the earliest passenger cars did not have electricity—light was provided from individual gas or kerosene lamps, and air-conditioning had not yet been invented. As time went on, however, railcar electrical needs evolved. Electrification of railroads dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with both propulsion and auxiliary power supplied by either a third (or fourth) rail or by overhead power lines.

However, steam locomotives still dominated much of the US rail system due to the issues associated with transmitting power over long distances, and the small dynamos on steam locomotives were (and still are) inadequate to supply the electrical needs of cabooses, passenger cars, baggage cars, and even some freight cars. Some clever engineers decided to use the rotation of the wheels to drive generators (lower left) to provide the needed power with batteries installed to cover the time periods when the train was not moving. Because steam locomotives (including the 2926) provided steam to the railcars for heat, other engineers tapped into this resource and installed small steam-driven turbo-generators in the cars (lower right).



We welcome comments or questions on any issues of interest—please sent them along—we have experts just waiting to answer them for you!

**A short historical note:** One of the early concerns voiced about steam locomotives (and one of the reasons that diesel-electric systems eventually took over the rails) was the threat of boiler explosions. Some have characterized boiler explosions as a “scourge of American life.” According to Wikipedia, “some 50,000 Americans died every year in these accidents, which, during the 1850s, occurred on average once every four days.” Of course, not all these events involved steam locomotives, but whenever locomotives were involved, the events were catastrophic. The worst such steam locomotive boiler explosion occurred in San Antonio, Texas, at 8:55 am, on March 18, 1912, killing 36 and injuring 50 more (lower left). The image on the right shows the results of a boiler explosion near Belen in 1947, killing the two men in the cab.



Essentially the mechanism for most locomotive boiler explosions was as follows: For whatever reason (inattention, sight glass malfunction, buildup of foam, traveling downhill at too great an angle, etc.) the water level in the back of the boiler dropped below the top of the firebox, known as the crown sheet. Fireboxes were simply made of steel, and the temperature inside was well above the melting point of steel, so the crown sheet would fail, allowing the water in the boiler, which was at its boiling point (for 2926 that’s about 6,000 gallons at about 420° and 300 psig) to immediately flash to steam. The energy release would be equivalent to about 4.8 tons of TNT.

**What’s new in the store:** The store has shirts, caps, books, and knick-knacks that are sure to please. Drop by and see what we have available. (We are still working to get our online store up and running. Please be patient!) **Remember that your tickets for the Buca di Beppo feast on February 24 are available in the store and must be purchased by the 16<sup>th</sup> so we know how many folks will be coming.**

**How you can help and other tidbits:** If you are interested in donating to our cause (because operating a steam locomotive is expensive!) go to our [GoFundMe](#) and [Venmo](#) links! Be sure to check out our [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#) pages as well! Other potential sites of interest: our friends at the [Wheels Museum](#) and activities at the [Albuquerque Railyards](#). Please see our Membership page to discover our other volunteer opportunities.

# Happy Presidents' and Valentines Days

