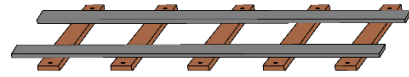


# On Track



Vol 3, Number 3, March 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:

R.Duck Locomotive works has done a fantastic job on their 2900 model. Tripp Aquadro, owner and founder, did a two-day livestream in mid-February on the build of their first prototype model. The two-inch gauge model is over four feet long and the detail is amazing! The reverser works and is operated by a lever in the cab! The extending smokestack works and is operated by a lever in the cab! Check out his Facebook page for more details.



This past month our turntable project director, Chris Rosol, asked the board to approve a list of jobs that NMHR would be willing to fund, independent of the Legislative Capital Outlay funds. Most of the projects were approved and Chris and his turntable crew are working on things like diesel fuel tank cleaning and restoration, diesel engine radiator repair, and covers for the gearing and engine. We are waiting for the 2023 Capital Outlay funds to start work on the hydraulic system and drive gear restoration and overhaul (see below). The turntable crew recently removed the diesel fuel tank and brought it to the site for cleaning and repair.

We had a great group get-together at Buca di Beppo. Everyone left full (stuffed?) and happy. We'll have more of these in the future.



In the restoration yard, we have been working to run communication and data lines through the site so that we can provide internet to the World Headquarters, Safety Office, and Store. We will be getting a server and routers soon. With these improvements we are also going to work on getting our trainings and compliance tracking online. The new year brought a requirement for our members, especially our active members who come to work at the restoration site, to acknowledge our new Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation policy. This policy is a requirement of the state and city government agencies we work with to do business with them.

We are working with a new member, Robert Jones, a chemist by education and profession, who is going to be our new Membership Coordinator. He will help us determine the interests of new

members and pairing them to the tasks that might be best suited to their interests and that satisfy our needs.

In a “I don’t know if this is good news or bad news” note: the city has installed a six-foot tall fence encompassing the perimeter of the turntable and radius tracks in the South Rail Yards. The city recently constructed temporary parking in that area to help ease overflow from activities on the north side (primarily to be used for vendor parking for the wildly successful summertime Rail Yards Market). The city installed the fence for safety; to prevent people from inadvertently tripping over exposed rails or worse, falling into the turntable pit. The fence was installed with two vehicle (i.e., locomotive) and one pedestrian gate. It’s an attractive and well-constructed fence though we will have to learn how to work around it and the limitations it may present to us.

### **Capital Outlay Corner:**

NMHR has been working with RioMetro, operators of New Mexico’s RailRunner commuter rail, to spend the \$200k the governor appropriated to us before it reverts to the state’s general fund in June (and nobody wants that!). RioMetro, NMHR, Herzog, and Guzman Construction met this month to discuss our requirements for replacing the track from the city’s property line to the edge of the turntable pit in the South Rail Yards. Everyone is on board with that plan and, assuming the City Council approves the expenditure of funds, track replacement is expected to begin in April/May. These are encouraging developments. On a related topic, we continue to work with the city to obtain a renewed cooperative use agreement for our activities on the turntable and in the South Rail Yards in general. A big thank you to Kooch Jacobus, our lobbyist and member who works tirelessly on behalf of our organization, Donnie Quintana, City of Albuquerque, and Robert Gonzales, RioMetro, for getting us this far. To everyone else involved in these efforts besides the few I listed – Thank you!

I provided city officials with an updated statement of work describing what we would like to accomplish with the \$475k of 2023 Legislative Capital Outlay funds that were appropriated for us. The list is long and probably more money than we have but it will be a good start on getting the turntable back in pristine shape. The revised statement of work includes structural and mechanical evaluations; hydraulic and drive system restoration and repair; turntable cleaning, preparation, and painting; replacing the ties and rails across the top of the turntable; ring rail repair; and other necessary work.

Finally, the 30-day New Mexico legislative session ended in the middle of February and decisions were made concerning the 2024 Legislative Capital Outlay requests. This year NMHR made a request for a significant dollar amount to make numerous infrastructure improvements at the South Rail Yards. Although we didn’t get what we asked for, we did get \$200k appropriated to continue our turntable work. Now we must wait for the governor to sign the 2024 Capital Outlay bill for these funds to be officially approved and made available to us.

**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:** We all know him as the master of Lurch—the go-to person when our mercurial car mover suddenly stops car moving. Of course, this can only be Tom Turrentine. Tom is from Belen where he graduated from high school in 1964 (Go Eagles!). He started with his train fascination at an early age because his dad ran the Railroad Club (no, not a model railroad club but a very popular drinking establishment) on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in the Hub city.

He had a hankering to fly, so he joined the Navy out of high school and became an air crewman on Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) aircraft after attending schools in Memphis and Norfolk. He was an electronic technician, a radioman, and even did some radar and navigation work while flying in the Navy's P-2 ASW aircraft, mostly out of Jacksonville, Florida.



After he got out of the Navy, he went to work for General Dynamics as a preflight and maintenance technician for the F-111 aircraft, then a mainstay of the war effort in Vietnam. That job lasted for two years until there was a lay-off at General Dynamics. Tom took advantage of his new free time and went to the University of Texas at Arlington and UNM and then decided that he wanted to hang up a legal shingle, so he entered UNM Law School.

Discovering that the legal profession was not for him, he was rehired by General Dynamics as a technical writer to produce a pilot's manual for the brand-new F-16 fighter. It seems that he had finally found his niche—he continued as a technical writer for several years, for several companies, covering military and commercial aircraft. However, he still had a yearning for flying and got his commercial pilot's license. He eventually wound up at Boeing where he wrote the technical manual for the 747 and became an instructor on the 747-400 simulator. Most important about Boeing, however, is that he met a 737 test engineer and test pilot named Terry. They were married in 2001. Tom's daughter, Anna, is married to a high school football coach, and Tom and Terry have three grandkids.

In 2011, Tom and Terry moved to Arkansas to take care of his mother, and they continued to consult for Boeing. In 2018, they moved to Albuquerque and closed the consulting chapter of their lives. Not that Tom would be bored or anything. He found out about the 2926 when Terry got him a membership for his birthday. In addition to that hobby, he is an amateur astronomer, a ham radio operator, an electronics wizard, and still plays with flight simulation programs.

So, the next time we move the old girl, give a wave to our Lurchmeister—Sir Tom of the Red Bandana.

**How does it work:** In past issues, we have described the two main ways to fill the boiler—the injector (March 2022) and the Worthington system (February 2022). Once the water leaves the injector (engineer's side) or the hot water pump (fireman's side) it goes to two large check valves on the top of the boiler, just forward of the sand dome. These check valves are designed to prevent backflow into the upstream piping. However, they are not identical. The check valve on the injector side is substantially smaller. This difference is because the flow rate from the injector is much less than that from the hot water pump. Each of the check valves discharges into the triangular plenum between the two valves. From the plenum, the water is directed down into the boiler over a circular diffuser plate. Although both the injector and Worthington system preheat the water, it will still not be at full boiler temperature. The

diffuser plate breaks up the flow into a shower configuration to permit it to be heated more efficiently as it enters the boiler.



**A short historical note:** Everyone (and everything!) needs a little TLC! And so it was/is with the 2926. After more than a decade of hard work for the Santa Fe and constant attention in the Albuquerque shops, she was pushed into Coronado Park at 2 PM on October 31, 1956. Suddenly, the maintenance stopped. The City's idea of TLC was painting (32 coats in some places over the years!), but that just didn't hack it. By the 1990s, the old girl was really going downhill. Forty-one years of monsoon rain, spring winds, summer heat, and some vandalism had taken their toll—the boiler sheathing was badly rusted, and the asbestos insulation was visible and beginning to fray. The City decided that their liability and cost for maintaining this public display outweighed the value it provided—the 2926 was destined for the scrap yard.

Enter Ed Bukove, a local pharmacist and railfan. In August 1995, at the Shores Clubhouse, Ed led a group of similarly enthusiastic railfans, soon to be known as the Albuquerque Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society, to determine how to save this piece of New Mexico history.



Things like this move slowly, but by August 1997, the group was chartered by the New Mexico State Corporation Commission under the leadership of president Frank Gerstle to “move and restore to running condition, if possible, the steam engine #2926.”

After another two years, the organization, by then known as the New Mexico Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society, signed a contract with the City for the princely sum of \$1.00 to purchase the locomotive and caboose and move it out of the park. The move to a temporary home on the north side

of Interstate 40 had to be accomplished ASAP to avoid a conflict with freeway modifications. This was accomplished between June 23 and June 25, 2000.



The locomotive had broken free of the park and was ready for what would become nearly a quarter century of REAL TLC.

**What's new in the store:** We now have a full assortment of merchandise that have been rebranded with the new New Mexico Heritage Rail moniker. Be the first on your block to own some of this great material!



**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 St. Patrick's Day!*

