

Reports for NRHS Fall Meeting
October 12, 2024
Wilmington, DE

1. Spring Conference Recap
2. Heritage Grants
3. Membership
4. RailCamp
5. Historic Preservation Award
6. Online Content Committee
7. Directory of Attractions

2024 Spring Conference Recap

Early in 2024 President White tasked Eric Fogg and Mike Yuhas organizing the NRHS Spring Conference. Those were our only instructions and Spring was just a few short weeks away.

Having never done anything exactly like this before, we went with what we knew and who we knew. So, we asked the legendary Henry Posner III, CEO of the Iowa Interstate Railroad, if he could help. Known as a hard negotiator, we weren't certain what, if anything, he might be willing to do.

Were we surprised!

Mr. Posner offered a tour of his Iowa facilities and a ride across the state to the IAIS rail yard in Silvis, Illinois. He threw in use of his personal railcars and included lunch. We held our breath waiting to see what this would cost.

"Nothing." That was what he would charge NRHS for the entire trip. He did suggest a contribution to a railroad-related charity.

After that, things fell quickly in place. We found a hotel in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the headquarters of the railroad, and held the usual NRHS meetings.

Because we were going to Silvis, we asked Steve Sandberg, head of Railroading Heritage of Midwest America, if we could tour their facilities, which are rarely open to the public. They have lots of locomotives and cars we'd seen over the years, now in the process of getting a new lease on life.

To cap off a day to remember, NRHS made contributions to Operation Lifesaver - a favorite of the IAIS, and the RRHMA, who's doing the preservation work we all champion.

Thanks to some careful planning and our gracious hosts, the Spring Conference covered all our expenses, made two generous contributions to groups we appreciate, and finished the weekend in the black.

Heritage Grants Committee Report
2024Fall Conference

1. Several issues with checks sent to recipients this year due to problems with the US Postal Service. We are pursuing using ACH transfers for 2025 awards.
2. The 2025 NRHS Heritage Grants applications will be available on the NRHS Website in mid-November. The deadline for the 2025 applications will be January 31, 2025, at 8PM EST via the NRHS Website. Dawn Holmberg had placed this information on the NRHS Website.
3. NRHS has agreed to award \$150,000 in 2025 via the Heritage Grants program.

Thank you. Charlie Webb

NRHS MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT OCTOBER 12, 2024, WILMINGTON, DE CONFERENCE

Membership Statistics

Total Membership as of 9/30/2024: 4,032 (increase of 1.11% since last report of 8/15/2024)

Neon – Credit Card Processing Fee

The majority of our members, when paying on-line, have opted to cover the credit card processing fee as a donation to the NRHS. For the year 2024, \$2,403.11 in credit card processing fees have been donated to the NRHS by our members.

New Members Welcome Packets

Mike Yuhas and Becky Gerstung have coordinated the mailing of membership cards and member welcome packets to new members. Thank you to both Mike and Becky for enhancing our new members experience in joining the NRHS!

Neon – Membership Renewals

The first membership renewal reminder for 2025 was sent on September 27, 2024 as part of the multi-pronged membership renewal campaign. Every member that chooses to renew online helps save on the expense of printing and mailing a renewal notice.

Neon – New Feature!! - Geotarget Mini Email Campaigns

In the past, chapters have asked for names and contact info of nearby NRHS members not affiliated with their chapter. Owing to privacy concerns, we no longer disclose non-affiliated member personal information to anyone, for any reason. However, our Neon contact relationship management system does provide us with the ability to send mini email campaigns to limited audiences on behalf of chapters. A chapter in South Hoople, for example, is planning an outing or a dinner, and would like to get the word out to NRHS members within a 50-mile radius of the venue. The chapter would design a simple promotional email, and the NRHS membership team would put the email into the standard NRHS template and send it to all members within 50 miles of South Hoople. The email is sent by NRHS on behalf of your chapter. Send a message to membership@nrhs.com to start the process.

Membership Committee Members

Patti Webb, Chairperson
Mike Yuhas
Tony White
Becky Gerstung
Steve Siegerist

A special thank you to the Membership Committee for your continued efforts and dedication to the NRHS members.

Membership keeps the NRHS on track for the future!

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Webb
NRHS Membership Committee Chairperson

RailCamp Report

RailCamp 2024. Thanks to generous chapters, other organizations, individuals and reserve funds received from various sources including donations with dues renewals we were able to provide half of the campers with full or partial scholarships. This is an expensive undertaking. The costs for housing, meals and especially insurance continue to rise. Even so, our intent is to keep tuition the same as it has been for the past two years.

The University of Delaware where East campers stay has already been contacted with possible dates. Some of our partners, inviting us to return, have also been contacted. The 2025 application will be available January 1, 2025.

Any chapter wishing to sponsor a camper with a full or partial scholarship needs to contact us in January, even if you do not have a specific camper in mind by that time. Contact me for more information on becoming a sponsor.

Our volunteer counselors and other support staff make RailCamp a success. We are always looking for additional people to step up and be part of this popular and very successful project of the NRHS. If you have questions about what is involved, contact me. These kids have opportunities most railfans only dream about. This is your chance to get behind the scenes and insure this program continues.

Becky Gerstung
RailCamp Program Director

Report of the Historic Preservation Award committee
Fall, 2024

The Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award program is designed to give visibility to a common carrier railroad (class I, shortline, regional) for their efforts in preserving railroad history. Potential recipient railroads must be in business to move freight (or passengers), and not in the nostalgia trade. In other words, the preservation of a historical asset is not central to the mission of the railroad; the railroad selected has embarked on the preservation as a nod to the railroad's own history specifically, and the rich history of the North American railroad industry in general.

Our partnership with Railway Age and Railway Track & Structures brings prominence to the award (and NRHS) in the eyes of the professional railroad community.

The NRHS and Railway Age/RT&S awards team reviewed all qualified nominations and selected a 2024 honoree. The recipient is delighted to receive our recognition. The award will be presented in person at a short ceremony at the Railway Supply Institute conference and trade show in Chicago on Friday morning, October 11, at which time we will share the winner with NRHS members and the world at large.

The 2025 award cycle will begin early, as the presentation of next year's award will take place at the Railway Interchange trade show in May. Nominations will open in January.

Submitted by Mike Yuhas, on behalf of R. Victor Varney, Edward M. Berntsen, Tony White (NRHS) and William Vantuono (Railway Age) and David Lester (RT&S)
October 2, 2024

Initial report of the online content committee
Prepared by Tom Hogan, Iowa Chapter, and Mike Yuhas, Wisconsin Chapter
Committee co-chairs
October, 2024

Our proposal to begin expanding NRHS online content in earnest was approved at the August board meeting. We are starting slow. We have two or three slide show-type programs in production, and there are a few webinar-type ideas under development.

Announcements will be sent by email to all members in advance of these programs.

It is important to keep in mind that the new content will complement the historic footage being digitized and uploaded by Tom Coughlin and Marlin Taylor.

Members who wish to help this initiative succeed are encouraged to contact us with suggestions and program ideas: thesteelhighway@gmail.com and mike@mikeyuhas.org.

2025 NRHS Directory of Railroad Attractions

Shirley and Wesley Ross

Shirley and I will begin compiling the 2025 list sometime in late January. We will be sending a letter of invitation to approximately 750 railroad museums and attractions across the country. Our list is large; but, by no means, complete. We would like to ask the cooperation of all NRHS members to assist us in this task. If you know of any attraction that you think should be listed, and might not be on our list, please contact us with the name and US mailing address for the attraction. You may contact us at: wesleyross@windstream.net

Secondly, many attractions do not respond to our invitation to participate in the program. In order to get more participation this year, we would like to ask all NRHS members to contact any attractions in their area and alert someone that the letter of invitation will be coming in late January or early February and a response to that invitation must be sent back to us by mid-March. The list will be published in May and should be available around Memorial Day, so that members can use it for summer vacations.

This year, we will publish all attractions that respond. Any attraction that is free, or willing to offer a specific discount for NRHS members, on admissions or Gift Shop purchases, will be printed in **Bold Face Type**. Remember, all listings apply only during 2025, so each attraction MUST submit their information each year.