

## Kansas City & St. Louis Trip

September 9-11, 2011

### **Friday, September 9, 2011**

When planning the 2011-2012 school year, the club decided to budget for a trip to Kansas City and St. Louis, riding Amtrak's Missouri River Runner between the two. As with most trips, the exact dates of the trip were left to be decided in the fall. In late August, it was found that Amtrak's 40th Anniversary exhibit train would be stopping in St. Louis on the weekend of September 10th and 11th, so it was decided to take the fall trip early in the semester to see it. This would be the club's sixth trip to the Kansas City area, but the first to St. Louis.

We left Ames in one of ISU's Dodge Grand Caravans around 4:30, making our first stop in Osceola, IA for supper at the KFC/Taco Bell. There we saw a couple of BNSF coal trains. We proceeded to Kansas City, where we would be staying at the home of club member Jeff Von Brown's sister. After our arrival, we watched the Missouri vs. Arizona State football game.

### **Saturday, September 10, 2011**

We left to go to Kansas City Union Station to get on the eastbound Missouri River Runner, which departed at 8:15 am. As we arrived at the station, the eastbound Southwest Chief was stopped at the platform. We also saw the Ringling Brothers circus train parked near the station. After boarding our train, we left east out of Kansas City, on the Union Pacific (former Missouri Pacific). It was noted that at most stops along the way, there was an old Missouri Pacific caboose on display near the station. The train made good time, and arrived in St. Louis 14 minutes early, at 1:41 pm. We pulled into the new St. Louis Gateway Transportation Center on a platform next to the exhibit train. Inside the bridge over the platforms, there were a few tables set up with railroad related information. We ventured down to the exhibit train, which consisted of 3 refurbished baggage cars used as display cars, a sleeper car for the staff and a food service car used as a gift shop. The train was powered by P40 #822, painted in the Phase III paint scheme. The train also had F40PH #406, an NPCU also painted in the Phase III paint scheme. After looking through the displays, and stopping in the gift shop, we decided to make a quick visit to St. Louis Union Station, a few blocks away. We had about an hour before needing to be back at the Amtrak station for our return train to Kansas City. We walked quickly to Union Station, where we went inside the mall that was built in part of the old train shed. We looked around the lobby of the hotel that is now located in the train shed and head house of the station.

Throughout the day, we had been following the score of the Iowa State vs. Iowa football game that was being played in Ames. We had known that it had gone into overtime, and as we were at Union Station, found out that Iowa State had won in the third overtime, 44-41. After this, we had a quick meal at the food court in the mall, and made our way back to the Amtrak station.

We departed St. Louis on the westbound Missouri River Runner on time at 4:00. The train was the same one that we were on earlier in the day and we were also in the same car. The return trip was also mostly on time and we arrived in Kansas City 14 minutes early. We then went to Fiorella's Jack Stack Barbeque, located in a former freight house across from Union Station, to

eat. We sat outside so we could watch trains, including the westbound Southwest Chief, which stopped at the station for about 30 minutes. With that train, we had seen every Amtrak train that passed through Kansas City that day, having seen both of the other two Missouri River Runners between St. Louis and Kansas City.

### **Sunday, September 11, 2011**

We departed Jeff's sister's house in the morning and returned to Ames, arriving in the early afternoon.

Overall, the trip was a good experience and enjoyable. We got to see two historic train stations and some good views of the Missouri River from the train. We also got to be part of Amtrak's 40th Anniversary.