

Empire State Express



September 2019

PUBLICATION OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER NRHS, INC.

Editor: John C. Dahl Email: newsletter@nfcnrhs.com

The meeting of the Chapter will be held on **Friday, September 13, 2019 at 7:00 PM** at the DeGraff Community Center, 139 Division St., North Tonawanda, NY. **NOTE EARLIER MEETING START TIME.**

ALASKA WITH BRUCE BECKER



**September 13, 2019
Chapter Program**

**Take A Ride On
Alaska's Railroads**

**New Earlier Start Time! 7:00pm
DeGraff Community Center - North Tonawanda**

Chapter member Bruce Becker visited the 49th state in August 2018 and rode trains of both the White Pass & Yukon Railroad and the Alaska Railroad. The weather was beautiful and his pictures & video are stunning.

Join us as we kick off the 2019-2020 Chapter meeting season with the best in railroading!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Well now, that was fast. Summer is supposed to be lazy and laid back. January and February never go by that fast. Why is that?

As we have done for many years, we parked cars for parade night during Canalfest. It was overcast and a few drops of rain fell, but otherwise a good evening. The patronage was down from previous years, only 31 cars came in. Just the same, that netted us \$93.05 that we didn't have before. Thanks to Greg Gerstung, Bruce Becker, Dennis Hurley and Al Le Teste for their help.

In the last two or three years, we have had the pleasure of hosting a tour of high school students who were participating in an NTSB "summer camp" program at UB. This year the budget would not allow them to come to our Museum. However, I did go to UB and speak to them on August 5th. If the opportunity is available next year, I would like to have a PowerPoint presentation to show them.

Something to do over the winter.

Most of you are aware by now the Central Terminal Restoration Corp. has farmed out most of the activities that they used to run themselves. We were given the train show. The preparations are progressing rapidly at this point. Even as I write this, they are setting up the tables on the concourse for us. The response from the vendors has been really good so far. The undercurrent of excitement is building as September gets closer. It's going to be great!

The 2020 edition of the Chapter Calendar will be available at the September meeting and at the Train Show. We are doing color now! Check it out!

Work has continued on the archive room expansion, we tore up the floor within the footprint of the new area. On July 27 that step was completed. Unfortunately, we found some electrical work that has to be done before we can continue. The main panel in the north end needs an upgrade. The flooring and framing will have to wait for this to be completed. Once that this is done the new under layment can go down and the metal stud framing can go up. That should go quickly. That will be followed by drywall work and wiring. We may yet accomplish this during this calendar year.

We are trying to wrap up the outside work on EL-2. We had some issues with contractor, but we have been working through them. Once the dust settles on that, we can pick up again on what we are doing over there. The response to what we have done so far has been almost entirely positive.

We will be hosting the Historical Society of the Tonawandas for their September meeting on the 11th at our Museum. It's the celebration of the centennial of the new alignment of the NYC line through the Tonawandas. A special display was assembled for the occasion. There will be a lot people in the building that evening, if you want to help out, call Becky at 434-5665.

One final note, remember that the September meeting will start at 7:00 pm. Until then, I'll see you at the meeting or at the Central Terminal Train Show.

Jim Ball

90 YEARS FOR CENTRAL TERMINAL – TRAIN SHOW SEPTEMBER 7 – 8

The Chapter is gearing up to host this year's annual Buffalo Central Terminal Train Show.

As the 90th year since the Terminal opened in 1929, the Chapter is proud to offer a quality reproduction of the Dedication Program from June 22, 1929 which described the new station in some detail. Originals of this vintage document are quite rare and highly sought after by collectors. You can get a quality reproduction for your collection at the train show for the modest cost of \$5; or \$7 postpaid thru our new online store. (If only mailing rates could be what they were in 1929!)

Come support the Chapter, visit the show and see one of the finest events to be held in historic Buffalo Central Terminal. The station is certainly the most historic-rail place in western New York where one can see the world of model trains today and marvel at the grand architecture of the heyday of passenger travel by train.

The show runs Saturday and Sunday, September 7 and 8th 10 AM to 4 PM. Free parking. See you there!



In a view that could very well date to 90 years ago, the new Terminal looms in the background of the Railway Express building near Lindbergh Drive (later renamed Memorial) and William Street. The fire proof reinforced concrete facility pre-dates the Terminal's construction by a few years. Back in the glory years of New York Central's Great Steel Fleet, express was a huge business. The staggering amounts of mail and express handled by the Terminal and REA all travelled by rail. Every major American city had a similar facility, and each small town depot of any consequence was an endpoint on the network. No Internet, Amazon, United Parcel or FedEx needed. Railway Express Agency was the defacto standard for fast, reliable delivery for just about everything that was not a letter, magazine/newspaper or postcard.

Photo: Niagara Frontier Chapter, NRHS archives

LAST RUNS

Joe Kroth

Our long time member Joe Kroth passed away in June after a short illness. Joe was 79. A modest, quiet fellow, Joe was a regular at Chapter meeting nights and was a frequent volunteer at our chicken BBQ fundraiser events. In recent years he had contributed photos to the Chapter calendar, but up to then never thought his humble railroad photos made long ago and semi- forgotten about were worth much. On the contrary, Joe had some of the most interesting and historic images we have seen in recent years. The Chapter archive is now home to these photographs. They have been digitized for use by historians and in our Chapter publications. The Chapter extends its sincere condolences to Joe's family.

Ronald Dukharm

Well known western New York rail historian Ronald Dukharm passed away in late June. Ron was an expert on local railroads, especially the Erie Lackawanna and was also a trustee of the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society whose archives are now located in Buffalo at the Western New York Heritage Center.. He was also a member of the WNYRHS and very active in that group. The Chapter extends its sincere condolences to Ron's family.

THE RAILROAD TRAVELER – Two vignettes of Norway's railroads

Photos by Mark Tiede



Norway's railway system is modern, electrified and heavily patronized. Like many European stations, Mvrdal, Norway showcases passenger trains in a historic, light filled, glass and iron work train shed, not some dank platform at a cinder block box or worse, "temporary" trailers in a remote parking lot. Enjoy these two examples of what we should but do not have in this country.



MEMORIES OF THE DINING CAR SERVICE

by Jim Ball

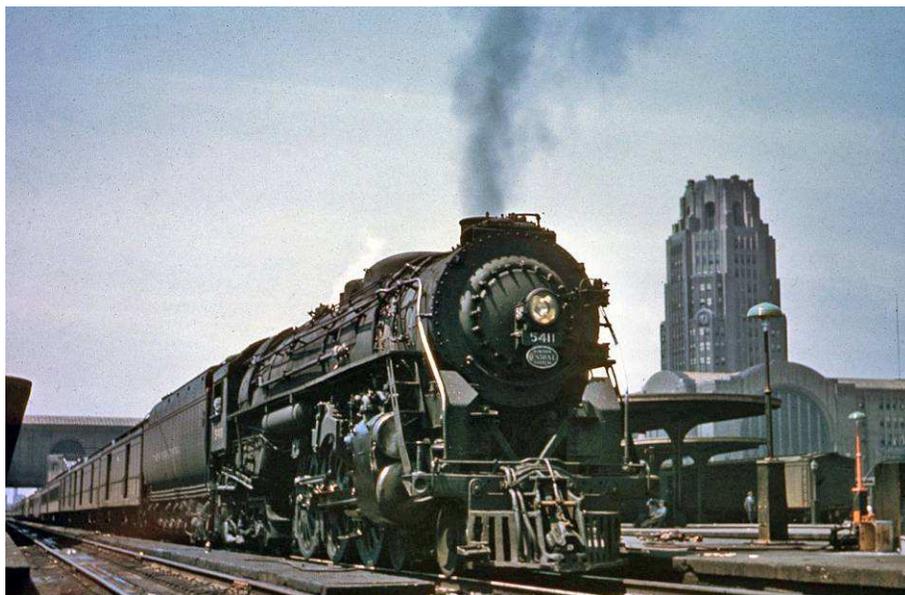
My father, Cyril Ball, worked for the New York Central in Buffalo for nearly all his adult life. He went to work in the commissary on Green Street before Central Terminal was built. He started as a bottle sorter and worked his way up to Storekeeper. As with every occupation, when something unusual happens at work, the story comes home to the family. Railroads by their nature are the type of business that generates lots of stories.

Take for instance, the time during the 1930's or 40s (the exact date is lost to time) that a steer escaped from the Buffalo stockyards which were just across the tracks from the depot. (Central Terminal). Between the station and the stockyards were twenty-six tracks. Imagine the traffic of arriving, departing, passing trains and switching moves which were made over this maze of tracks. It was a dangerous place for anyone, let alone a steer on the loose! The escaped animal managed to cross all the tracks without being hit. It then entered the depot through a door most likely propped open to enjoy the summer breeze.

Dad's work included ordering fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and fish on a daily basis. This ensured that the ingredients for the meals offered on the Central's dining cars were worthy of their 'First Class' designation. He was engaged in making out orders that day when he heard the clip-clop of the hoofs of the escaped steer walking down the corridor. The steer paid Dad no mind as he walked by him. Upon arrival at the end of the corridor, the animal was faced with a choice. The door leading out onto Curtis Street was propped open for ventilation. The stairway down to the basement had a wooden gate across it. The wary critter opted to "about face" and go back the way he had come! Dad remained behind the counter where he had been working and again the steer paid him no mind. Once outside the building, it was faced with the same twenty-six track gauntlet as before. Dad lost track of him after that.

There appeared in the newspaper the next day a short story about how the Buffalo police had spent quite a while trying to capture the poor, wary beast! They finally resorted to shooting it in the middle of William Street.

It was just another day on the job for my Dad.



- A typical NYC dining car menu from the 1920's shows an amazing array of culinary delights, including beef!

DINING SERVICE

NEW YORK
CENTRAL
LINES

<p>HORS D'OEUVRES— French Sardines in Olive Oil 65 Celery 35 C. & B. Chow Chow 25</p>	<p>Ripe Olives 25</p>	<p>Shrimp Cocktail 65 Midget Gherkins 25 Green Olives 25</p>
--	-----------------------	--

Our Specialties

<p>CREAM OF NEW TOMATOES, <i>Croulons</i>, Cup 30; Tureen . 45</p> <p>CONSOMME, <i>Double, Hot</i>, Cup 35; Jellied; Cup . 45</p> <p>CLAM BOUILLON Cup . 30</p> <p>FRESH LAKE SUPERIOR WHITEFISH, <i>Broiled, Lemon Butter, Potatoes in Cream</i> . . . 95</p> <p>FRIED EASTERN SCALLOPS with Bacon, <i>Tartare Sauce, Green Pepper Surpris</i>, <i>Potatoes Julienne</i> 95</p> <p>FRESH LAKE PERCH <i>Saute Meuniere</i>, <i>Potatoes Argentine, Navy Bean Salad</i>, <i>Bread and Butter, Tea, Coffee, Milk</i> . 1.10</p> <p>FRICASSEE OF CHICKEN en Casserole, <i>New Peas and Potatoes</i>, <i>Bread and Butter, Tea, Coffee, Milk</i> . 1.10</p> <p>VEAL CUTLETS <i>Saute, Creamed New</i> <i>Spinach, New Potatoes Lyonnaise</i>, <i>Bread and Butter, Tea, Coffee, Milk</i> . 1.10</p> <p>ROAST RIBS OF PRIME BEEF <i>with Vegetables</i>, <i>Bread and Butter, Tea, Coffee, Milk</i> . 1.10</p> <p>CANAPE OF RUSSIAN CAVIAR 75</p> <p>BREADED LAMB CHOPS with New Beets <i>and New Potatoes</i> 95</p>	<p>ASSORTED COLD MEATS, <i>Tomato Surpris</i> . 1.25</p> <p>HONEY-CURED HAM <i>Glace, Sultana Sauce</i>, <i>New Cauliflower and New Potatoes Rissole</i> . 95</p> <p>EGGS ON HEARTS OF LETTUCE, <i>Tartare Sauce</i> . 85</p> <p>IMPORTED TUNNY FISH in Olive Oil 65</p> <p>HOMEMADE NOODLES Polonaise 65</p> <p>ASSORTED FRESH VEGETABLES, <i>Poached Egg</i> . 95</p> <p>NEW CAULIFLOWER Hollandaise 50</p> <p>NEW GREEN PEAS with Chives or Butter . . . 50</p> <p>GRILLED SPANISH ONIONS 50</p> <p>NEW CREAMED SPINACH with Egg 50</p> <p>NEW POTATOES in Cream 50</p> <p>COTTAGE CUSTARD PUDDING, <i>Pineapple Sauce</i> . 35</p> <p>FRENCH VANILLA ICE CREAM <i>with Crushed Berries</i> . 45</p> <p>CANTALOUPE on Ice (Half) . 55; <i>a la Mode</i> . 50</p> <p>CREAM CHEESE with Toasted Rye Bread, <i>Guava Jelly</i> . 40</p> <p>PEACH SHORTCAKE with Whipped Cream . 45</p> <p>GREEN APPLE PIE . 25; <i>with Cheese</i> . 35; <i>a la Mode</i> . 45</p> <p>SLICED PEACHES with Cream 40</p> <p>ICED TEA OR COFFEE 50</p>
---	--

<p>FROM THE GRILL—Broiled Milk-Fed Chicken, half 1.25</p> <p>Loin Mutton Chop (1) 40 Bacon and Fried Eggs 80 Ham 80 Reduced Portion 45</p> <p>EGGS—Boiled (2) 35, Fried, Shirred or Scrambled (2) 40 Poached on Toast (2) 50</p> <p>OMELETTES—Plain 60 Parsley or Jelly 75</p> <p>VEGETABLES—Mashed Potatoes 25 Baby Carrots 30 Stewed Tomatoes 30 Early June Peas 30</p> <p>SALADS, COLD MEATS, ETC.— Cold Roast Country Ham, Julienne of Beets 90 Cold Chicken 1.25 Cold Roast Ribs of Prime Beef, Tomato Mayonnaise 95 Pineapple Salad, French Dressing 65 Asparagus Salad, Vinaigrette 50 Potato Salad 35 Sliced Cucumber 45 Roquefort Dressing 25 Rye, Plain 15, Toasted 20 Boston Brown Bread 15 Crackers 15 Cream Toast 50 Orange Juice, Iced 45 Preserved Strawberries 35 Hawaiian Pineapple 35</p>	<p>Sirloin Steak 1.80 Rack Mutton Chop (1) 65 Ham and Fried Eggs 80 Bacon 80 Reduced Portion 45 Au Gratin (2) 50 Scrambled Eggs with Kipperd Herring on Toast 65 Minced Ham or Bacon with Scrambled Eggs 75 With Chopped Ham or Bacon 75 Au Gratin Potatoes 35 French Fried 35 Refugee String Beans 30 Carrots and Peas in Cream 35</p> <p>Smoked Beef Tongue, Navy Bean Salad 90 Chicken Salad, Mayonnaise 95 Combination Salad 65 Tomato and Cucumber Salad 45 Lettuce and Tomato 45 Sliced Tomatoes 45 Mayonnaise of Shrimps 65 French Toast with Jelly 50 with Honey 75 Basy Bread (Reducing) 15 Raisin Bread 15 Whole Wheat Bread 15 French 15 Milk Toast 35</p> <p>FRUIT and DESSERTS—Orange 20 Sliced 30 Guava Jelly 35 Magnum Prunes 40 Preserved Figs with Cream 50 Bananas with Cream 40 Steamed Fig or Plum Pudding, Hard Sauce 40 French Vanilla Ice Cream 35 with Cake 45 Imported Roquefort Cheese 40 American, Pimento, Cream or Canadian Cream Cheese 30 (Hard or Soft Biscuits Served with All Cheese Orders)</p> <p>TEA, COFFEE, ETC.—Orange Pekoe, India, English Breakfast, Green or Oolong Tea (Pot for One) 25 Postum (Pot for One) 30 Cocoa (Pot for One) 30 Coffee with Cream (Pot for One) 25 Coffee (Demi-tasse) 15 Malted Milk (Pot for One) 30 Kaffee Hag (Pot for One) 35 Milk (Bottle) 20</p>
--	---

Above Portions per Person Only
An Extra Charge of 25 Cents per Person Will Be Made for Meals Served Out of Dining Car

Passengers are respectfully informed that no verbal orders for meals will be accepted and are requested to pay the punched total only on presentation of check on which the order is written

"Please see Steward in charge of car, if the service is not entirely to your satisfaction"

Chgo. 7-D J. R. SMART, Manager Dining Service, Buffalo, N. Y.

“SCENE” ON THE LINE



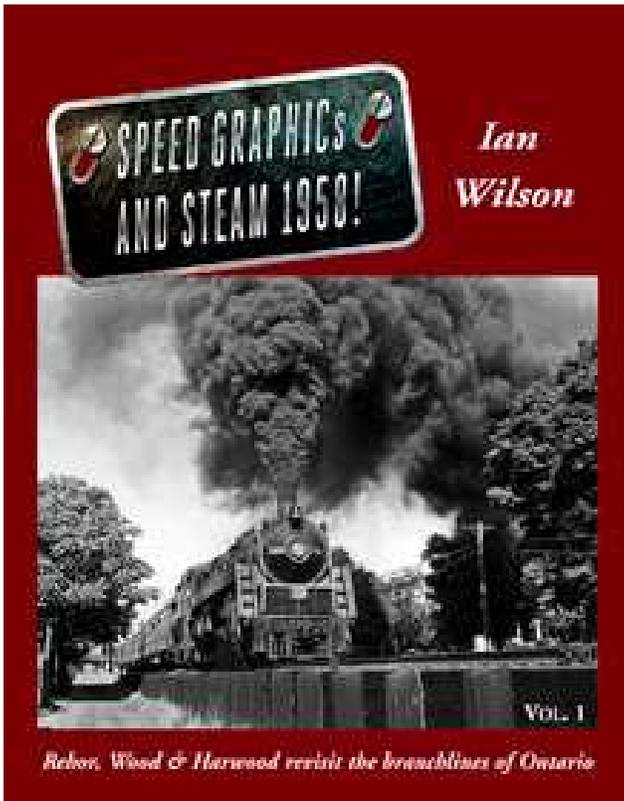
”Big Boy”, Union Pacific’s great 4-8-8-4 locomotive number 4014 was restored to operating condition over the preceding several years and this year began operations as a part of the 150th commemoration of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869.

Looking every bit like it had just emerged from the erecting halls of ALCO’s Schenectady, NY works, the Big Boy was on display in UP’s headquarters city, Omaha, Nebraska, on a hot 95 degree, brilliant summer evening, July 13, 2019. Two days later the engine will pull a public excursion eastward across the former Chicago & Northwestern mainline (now UP) to Boone, Iowa. From there the train would work its way east to visit various points on the UP through mid August before returning to Cheyenne, WY. In the Fall, #4014 will visit California.



Wherever he travels, the “Big Boy” gathers the faithful trackside to see a magnificent example of the steam locomotive era. With whistle, bell, wheel and piston sound of 1.2 million pounds of mechanical marvel in steel, and 132 foot in length....the Big Boy on the move is every bit as awe inspiring as one can imagine it would be. This is steam in its ultimate expression of might! *Both photos: John C. Dahl*

A RAILFAN'S BOOKSHELF



Speed Graphics and Steam 1958, Vol I.

By Ian Wilson

The end of the steam era is fascinating and numerous books exist to attest in words and photography the character of the times. Recognizing that the end of an era was almost upon them, three intrepid photographers from the USA ventured northward to the province of Ontario in Canada.

Messer's. John Rehor, Don Wood, and Herb Harwood first discovered what seemed like a promised land of steam in the summer of 1957. Seeing that even then it was fast changing, they returned in July 1958, the last "Indian summer" of steam, to continue to chronicle what would soon vanish.

Everywhere the "diesel invader" was at hand, passenger train off orders were extinguishing the once plentiful fleet of Pacifics and Moguls and Northerns which had roamed the myriad mainlines and branchlines of Canadian National and Canadian Pacific north and west of Toronto. Once again, Ian Wilson invokes a time machine to return us to trackside to

witness the drama in this stunning addition to what is destined to be *the* classic photo reference series on Canadian steam. The photography and reproduction quality is superb, perhaps among the highest quality that the printed medium can attain today. Volume II coming later this year will complete the series. If you love Canadian steam, this book and its siblings deserve a prominent place on your bookshelf. - JCD

Silver Rails through the Heart of the Park

By John Taibi with Peter Gores and David Link



This mammoth book celebrates the past operation of the New York Central's Adirondack Division (as well as portions of the Ogdensburg and Ottawa Divisions) and the current service being provided by the Adirondack Scenic Railroad into, through, and out of the Adirondack Park. In historic times, the New York Central and its forebears maintained service over some 271 miles from Herkimer and Utica to Remsen, and on to Tupper Lake and Lake Clear junctions, Lake Placid, Malone, and Adirondack Junction from which Montreal was reached via the Canadian Pacific Railway. The present Adirondack Scenic RR schedules provide for trains to run over only about a third of the Central's lengthy

territory, yet, the Park has remained the formidable constant, maintaining its vast forests, breathtaking mountains, and powerful waterways for rail travelers to admire and contemplate today as was done yesterday. The book includes the history of the railroad, towns, industries and people found along the Adirondack Division of the New York Central. There are 1720 images of the Adirondack Division, 442 of them in color. - JCD

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST

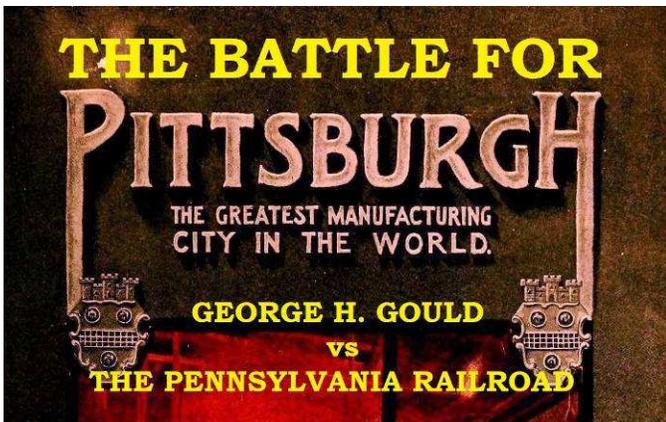


In a spectacular fire last November 7, the Mechanicstown, NY depot of the old New York, Ontario & Western was destroyed in a blaze of “suspicious origin”. The location is just east of the city of Middletown. The building actually began its life about 1883 as a station for the then building New York, West Shore and Buffalo. Suffice it to say that when the West Shore got into financial trouble in its rate war with the all powerful New York Central & Hudson River RR, the Central won. The line to Middletown was subsequently turned over to the O&W, itself just reorganized from bankruptcy. It became their mainline from Cornwall on the Hudson River to Middletown. From Cornwall to

Weehawken, NJ was still West Shore / New York Central and O&W was granted trackage rights over that route to reach New York City.

Of a very unique design, it was one of the last of the old West Shore structures still extant. The O&W itself was abandoned in 1957 and the tracks have been removed here for many years. The structure had served for a number of years as a restaurant, but in recent years was derelict. - JCD

ON THE TRACK AHEAD



Our October program by Tony Schill will review the all-too-brief history of the fabled Wabash Pittsburgh Terminal Railroad, the most critical part of George Gould’s transcontinental dream, and mile-for-mile one of the costliest railroads ever built. Join us for “the Battle for Pittsburgh” next month.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

The Chapter meetings starting in September will begin **EARLIER, at 7:00 pm, NOT at 8:00 pm**, per demand from our members. We’re all getting older...sorry....nothing we can do about that folks.... It is hoped the earlier start time, and thus earlier end time, will help encourage attendance at meetings. Mark your calendar now!

CHAPTER CALENDAR

- SEPT Station open Saturdays to public, 1 PM to 4 PM. Volunteers needed. Several restoration projects in progress.
- SEP 7-8 Train Show, Buffalo Central Terminal, 10 AM to 4 PM, Adults \$5. Over 100 tables, food, layouts, Chapter store and more. Volunteers needed, please contact Becky 434-5665.
- SEP 11 Historical Society of the Tonawandas tour of station, equipment and EL2 tower. 7:00 PM. Chapter volunteers needed to assist as tour guides. Please contact Becky 434-5665.
- SEP 13 Regular meeting, at Degraff Community Center, 7:00 PM. Program by Bruce Becker, Alaska Railroading.
- OCT 11 Regular meeting, at Degraff Community Center, 7:00 PM. Program by Tony Schill, The Battle for Pittsburgh, George Gould vs. the Pennsylvania RR.

The Niagara Frontier Chapter NRHS, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) publicly supported organization.

Contributions may be deductible for income tax purposes in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service.

***** IMPORTANT REMINDERS ***** If you receive hardcopy of the ESX and your mailing address changes, please send to the attention of Neal Kerin so that your Empire State Express can be addressed properly. Likewise, if your email address changes for any reason, please let Tony Schill know by sending it to the newsletter@nfcnrhs.com THANK YOU

The Empire State Express is mailed free to all members of the Niagara Frontier Chapter NRHS, Inc. Anyone who is not a Chapter / NRHS member may receive *The Empire State Express* by mail at a subscription rate of \$35.00 a year postpaid, e-mail rate \$25.00. Please contact the Chapter at PO Box 1043, North Tonawanda, NY 14120 for details.

www.nfcnrhs.com



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE EXPEDITE

The Empire State Express
 NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER NRHS, INC.
 POST OFFICE BOX 1043
 NORTH TONAWANDA, NY 14120