



THE POLAR EXPRESS™, New Exhibit, and Your Support: Autumn 2025 Updates!

Cooler weather is here—and the Museum remains open for visitors Tuesday-Sunday. While we don't offer regular daytime train rides in November and December, this time of year can be especially peaceful for a visit. If you are planning to visit soon, please keep in mind that the Colorado Railroad Museum will be closing early the day before Thanksgiving. We'll also be closed on Thanksgiving Day itself, plus December 24-25 and again December 31-January 1.

The year 2025 has been filled with accomplishments, including a number of facility improvements such as the upcoming installation of a new restroom facility next to the Pavilion. Additionally, significant locomotive repair, railcar refurbishment and repainting projects have enhanced the Museum's collection. There's a quick recap of all the accomplishments in this issue of the *Telegrapher*. As you review the list, I hope you'll see how committed the Colorado Railroad Museum is to the ongoing preservation of Colorado's rich railroading legacy.

The final months of the year are an especially important time for the Museum. **We invite you to support our mission** with a generous contribution, and to consider joining those who have included the Museum in their estate plans (see the related article in this edition of the *Telegrapher*). Looking ahead to 2026, we have an ambitious year planned, with major rehabilitation and restoration projects on the horizon, along with continued facility and exhibit improvements. Your support will help ensure that Colorado's rich railroad heritage continues to thrive.

The Museum's THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride is just about to launch for 2025—and once again, it's almost sold out! If you haven't yet bought tickets for this theatrical extravaganza, don't delay—over 90% of tickets are already sold!

Finally, as we head into winter, our staff team is putting together a complete schedule of programs and activities for 2026. We'll be sharing these online at the start of the New Year. In the meantime, my wish is for you and those you love to enjoy the changing seasons—all while staying safe and warm.

We hope to see you soon at the Museum!



Paul Hammond
Executive Director

IN THIS ISSUE:

Nearly Sold Out: THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride
Traqueros: Mexican Trackworkers and the American Railroad
Progress and Projects at the Museum
On Track for Colorado Gives Day AND Giving Tuesday
Colorado Railroad Museum Legacy Society
New Online Content



**THE
POLAR**

EXPRESS™ Train Ride

Tickets Are Selling Out for 2025!

Just like it has over the past several years, there's a lot of interest in the Colorado Railroad Museum's popular THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride for 2025. The event is already over 90% sold out as of October 31st. A big thank you goes out to our cast and crew, who are looking forward to welcoming families of all ages and backgrounds to this magical, theatrical holiday tradition.

This year, our award-winning three-part theatrical extravaganza returns with exciting new twists! The dazzling cabaret-style pre-show features brand-new songs, updated dance numbers, and even more audience interaction to draw everyone into the magic. For the first time ever, Santa himself will climb aboard THE POLAR EXPRESS™ to visit passengers in Premium Class cars, where each guest will receive their very own First Gift of Christmas. After the train's return from the North Pole, all guests (particularly Standard Class) can meet Santa in his workshop, where they too will receive their own Silver Bell!

Premium Class tables of four are still available on a variety of dates and showtimes, while Standard Class seating remains ONLY for select 8 p.m. performances. If you've been meaning to get tickets, don't delay. And remember, there's Magic if you BELIEVE! Interested in more information, tickets, or seeing a quick video about what all the Museum's THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride offers? [Click Here](#) to learn more!

New Exhibit: Now Open!

Traqueros: Mexican Trackworkers and the American Railroad

This past month, the Museum proudly unveiled its newest exhibit, *Traqueros: Mexican Trackworkers and the American Railroad*. This compelling exhibition sheds light on the largely untold stories of the *traqueros*—the Mexican and Mexican American laborers who built and maintained America's railroads from the late 19th century through the mid-20th century.

Through a powerful collection of artifacts, photographs, and personal narratives, the exhibit honors the resilience, skill, and contributions of these workers. It also explores the Bracero Program, a World War II-era labor initiative that brought Mexican workers to the U.S. to address labor shortages in essential industries, including railroads.

Traqueros marks the Museum's first fully bilingual exhibit, advancing the Museum's mission



of conveying the rich history of railroading in the Rocky Mountain region to the proudest possible audience. The exhibit will remain on display through August 2026.



Building A Better Museum!

Progress Continues in Golden

If you have visited the Museum in the second half of 2025, you may have noticed several exciting improvements in the works. This year, the Museum is adding restroom facilities next to the Pavilion, ready for use during this year's THE POLAR EXPRESS™ event. Additional lighting was also installed in the lower gallery, enhancing the exhibit space and making the displays

easier to see.

The new viewing platform beneath the trainshed canopy (just east of the Depot) has now been installed and is ready to welcome Colorado Midland observation-chair car No. 111 upon completion of its exterior restoration, which is expected in 2026. Chicago, Burlington & Quincy business car No. 96 is already positioned under the canopy, offering a glimpse of what's to come once the platform opens for public access. Together, these displays will showcase two iconic pieces of Colorado's rich railroad history, and help preserve these late 1880s artifacts in the process.

In addition, the Museum closed on another parcel of property this year, supporting future growth and planned facilities expansion in the coming years. Thanks to two transformative \$100,000 Challenge Grants provided by Dave Ropchan and Barb Melby, along with generous support from numerous other donors, the Museum has raised over \$600,000 toward its property acquisition efforts since these began in 2024. Another Challenge Grant of \$40,000 is now available, continuing to build momentum for this important initiative.

The Roundhouse team has made significant strides in restoration work, including the rehabilitation of 1887-vintage Colorado Midland observation-chair car No. 111 and the

ongoing cab rebuild of Colorado's oldest steam locomotive, Denver, Leadville & Gunnison No. 191. In addition to these projects, the tender tank of Denver & Rio Grande Western steam locomotive No. 491 is nearly complete, with just a few more rivets that need to be placed on the new water cistern before it is repainted. Once finished, No. 491 will be ready to pull THE POLAR EXPRESS™ for the 2025 season. Meanwhile, Rio Grande streamlined F units Nos. 5771 and 5762 have received a fresh coat of paint, and are only awaiting lettering and final details for restoration to their final operational paint scheme to be complete. Additionally, Rio Grande Southern (RGS) Caboose 0404 is being rehabilitated in Durango and is making great progress. If all goes according to plan, the caboose will join RGS No. 20 for its special excursions on the Durango & Silverton in 2026.

In other exciting news, a recent announcement revealed that Denver & Rio Grande Western steam locomotive No. 223 will be restored to operation through a partnership between Ogden City, the 223 Locomotive Foundation, and the Colorado Railroad Museum. Once restored, the 1881-built C-16 locomotive will operate for the public across Colorado's narrow-gauge railroads, with plans for a permanent home at the Museum. Read the full announcement on Facebook by [CLICKING HERE!](#)

This is just a partial recap! There's so much going on at the Museum in Golden. All of this progress is possible thanks to contributions from you, our generous supporters. To add your support, visit our online Donation page by [Clicking Here](#), email Rob Kramer at rob@crrm.org, or call Rob at (720) 274-5149 for more details, and/or about donating to the Museum generally or to any of these projects specifically.

On Track for Colorado Gives Day and Giving Tuesday

End-of-Year Giving Opportunities

Thanks to your continued support, we continue to proudly say we're *Still On Track* at the Colorado Railroad Museum!

The Museum remains deeply committed to its mission of bringing Colorado's rich railroad heritage to life. Our goal remains simple: We strive to bring our community together and make history more accessible to

everyone. However, to continue this momentum, we urgently need your support! With your generous year-end support, the Museum is *On Track* to continue making progress at a record-setting pace as we work to realize the ambitious goals of our Strategic Plan.



For those of you Coloradans who prefer to contribute online, December 9, 2025 is Colorado Gives Day. However, you don't have to wait until then! You can schedule a gift today to help ensure the Museum earns a matching percentage of the \$1 million-plus Incentive Fund available to all participating nonprofits. Last year, Coloradans rallied to raise more than \$54 million for Colorado nonprofit organizations like the Colorado Railroad Museum. You can help by going online now at <https://www.coloradogives.org/organization/coloradorailroadmuseum> and scheduling your Colorado Gives Day donation.

If you live outside Colorado, you may be more familiar with the worldwide online giving day known as GivingTuesday. This year, the Colorado Railroad Museum will be participating in GivingTuesday on Tuesday, December 2, 2025. You'll be able to donate online at <https://www.coloradogives.org/organization/coloradorailroadmuseum>, so stay tuned!

We look forward to another year filled with accomplishment, and we remain grateful for your continued encouragement and support. If you've received a mailed Annual Appeal letter from us in the past, you can expect that in the mail later this month, outlining more of the Museum's plans for the coming year. Thank you for helping to keep us *Still On Track* at the Colorado Railroad Museum!



Colorado Railroad Museum Legacy Society

An Invitation to Add Your Name!

What will your legacy be? Many longtime supporters of the Colorado Railroad Museum have realized the importance of preserving

Colorado's rich railroad heritage and have taken meaningful action by including the Museum in their estate plans. We invite you to add your name to the Legacy Society, evidence that you'll be helping ensure the Museum's collections, exhibits, and programs continue to be preserved, restored, and shared for benefit of future generations. Consider making a gift in your will or trust. Or, consider another beneficiary designation such as a 401(k) retirement fund—this one's easy to do, and it helps avoid estate taxes for your heirs as these cannot otherwise be avoided for a 401(k). Another option is an IRA Charitable Rollover gift, which may help satisfy your Minimum Required Distribution (MRD) and offer tax advantages depending on your financial situation.

If you let us know that the Museum is included in your estate plans, we'll add your name(s)

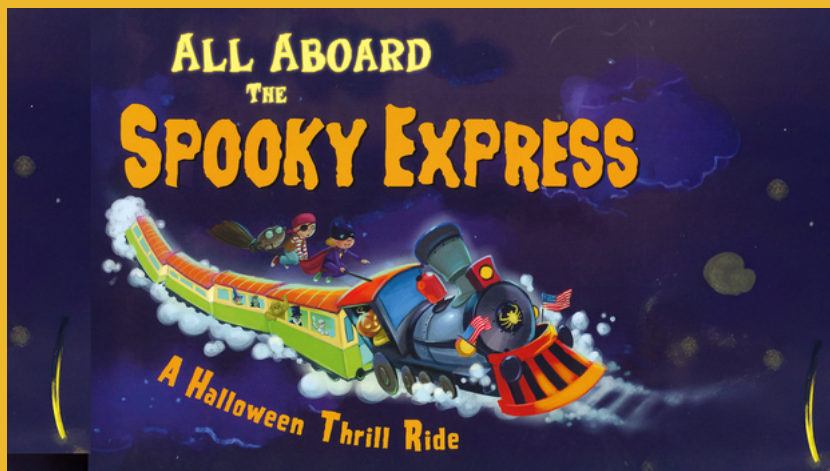
to the **Colorado Railroad Museum Legacy Society**. Society members receive an invitation to a special annual gathering with the Museum's Executive Director and leadership team. And starting in 2026, additional private events will be offered exclusively for Society members. You'll also have the satisfaction of knowing that you are leaving **YOUR legacy for the future**. For more information or to add your name to the Legacy Society, please contact Rob Kramer at (720) 628-2524 or via email: rob@crrm.org

New Online Content

*Virtual
Programs
Available
Online!*

During the month of October, the Colorado Railroad Museum's staff team has once again created

new programs that YOU can experience in the comfort of your own home. All Aboard, Online!



Now available are new episodes of all our popular, ongoing series, including the latest Storytime & Craft episode with a fun craft-making activity your younger child(ren) will enjoy doing at home. And, if you're still craving delicious food, you won't want to miss our most recent Dining on the Rails post— Baked Hubbard Squash and Autumn Dining Car Menus! These videos help you to experience Colorado's rich railroading heritage even if you can't make it to the Museum in person this month. [Click Here](#) to search the latest video offerings on our website!

There's Lots More Content to Like, Share and Follow! Whether you're on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or YouTube, the Colorado Railroad Museum posts interesting tidbits, stories, and videos throughout the week. Come along as we visit a "Railroad Attraction of the Month" throughout the year (for October this was the Gilpin Tramway and the Hidden Treasure "Rails-to-Trails" Hiking Path in Black Hawk, Colorado), a "Highlight of the Collection" (for October this was the Museum's beloved mascot, Spike, the Railroad Dog!), and see what's going on with programs and exhibits, in the Museum Roundhouse, and more. [Click Here](#) to see a collected feed of all our Social Media channels and posts, and "find your follow!"



Thanks to our generous Sponsors & Partners



Colorado RAILROAD Museum.org
Still On Track!

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