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# National Geographic: Love Those Trains

By Unknown

Sometimes it has seemed  
that railroads were doomed.  
The Durango-Silverton railroad  
is one of the most spectacular rides  
in the world.  
In 1960, it was nearly shut down.  
In 1883, the Orient Express ran  
from Paris to Istanbul  
created the ultimate in luxury travel.  
It was abandoned in 1977.  
In 1887, rotary snow plows first fought  
the snow drifts in the High Sierras.  
Looking like relics  
they seem improbable holdovers  
from the past.  
Once this streamlined locomotive  
hailed passenger trains  
at 100 miles an hour.  
But for 20 years,  
it sat outside a museum,  
its machinery rusting.  
Yet today  
these trains still run the rails.  
Now they evoke a more remote past  
when trains first  
bridged the continent,  
Ferried recruits to war  
provided celebrities with an opportunity  
to be seen and a chic way to travel,  
gave a mobile campaign platform  
to politicians,  
and offered a refuge for hoboes.  
Train tracks disfigure  
the countryside  
Trains assault the senses with  
brutal noise and begrime the air.  
How then account for the multitude  
of people who love trains?  
When you're actually running a train,  
you just can't get enough.  
I don't know.  
Maybe I'm just a junkie for trains.  
But that's about it.  
I bought a caboose back in the '50s

because I was busy riding trains  
in the '50s.  
And suddenly I read in the paper one day  
where trains were going to go out.  
All passenger trains  
would be taken off.  
And I knew unless I got a piece of ride  
on the train again.  
So that's when I bought my caboose  
and put it in my yard.  
There are grown men who ride toy  
steam trains at a mountain retreat.  
There are train buffs  
who choose to ride  
through South America's Andes  
on a baggage rack.  
There's town in Iowa  
that honors hoboes,  
and there are thousands  
of young people competing  
for the chance to engineer a train.  
There are people who harken  
to the lonesome whistle blowing  
and the clickety-clack  
of wheels on rails.  
Theirs is a worldwide fraternity  
with no membership requirements  
beyond sharing in the love of trains.  
You've got a sheet like this  
and it tells you  
who's sitting in every seat,  
and every seat is assigned, and...  
There are many people so enamored  
of trains that they take trains,  
not to go anywhere,  
but just for the pleasure of riding.  
Each year the North Alabama  
Railroad Club sponsors  
an all-day excursion on a  
Norfolk Southern steam train.  
Seats are always sold out  
and there's even competition  
for a chance to work on the engine.  
Bill Hayslip is a deputy sheriff,

and he loves trains so much that  
he volunteers on his day off  
for the dirtiest job  
in railroading-apprentice fireman.  
I've studied steam engines just  
about all my life.  
I guess I was born about  
There's something about a steam  
locomotive and railroad  
that's just romantic.  
A steam engine kind of has  
its own personality.  
It's like a lady.  
You have to treat it just right.  
Steam engines evoke  
a special affection.  
Though inanimate objects  
of iron and steel,  
they seem to breathe  
with the fire of life.  
This day the train will run to  
Chattanooga, Tennessee,  
evoking cherished memories  
of a popular song.  
I've often wondered  
if I was maybe one of those people  
that had trains  
in my bolld or something.  
Some people have alcohol,  
I have trains.  
I have spent the whole day  
in Birmingham  
just to see the two trains  
go through town.  
My wife thins that's crazy,  
but, you know, it's a thrill for me.  
Part way through the trip,  
the train comes to a stop  
in an open field.  
Now begins the prized ritual  
of the steam train excursion.  
The train backs up,  
cameras are readied,  
and then a sweet symphony

for every train-buff's ear.  
The train station in Chattanooga  
has been transformed  
into an entertainment center.  
When the train returns to Huntsville,  
Dr. and Mrs. Lonie Lindsey  
stay on in Chattanooga for dinner  
in a refurbished diner.  
They remember  
another train trip long ago.  
We got on the train in Tuscumbia,  
Alabama and we went to Chattanooga.  
Went up to the courthouse  
and we got married.  
That was 55 years ago,  
and we've had a  
very lovely marriage so far.  
And here 55 years later,  
we do the same start-over again.  
The most popular rooms at the Choo-Choo  
Hilton Hotel are old train cars,  
Nostalgic setting  
for recapturing fond memories.  
For those who love  
to ride steam trains,  
each trip is a journey into the past.  
In the beginning, steam engines were at  
the center of the Industrial Revolution  
which could not even begin until  
mankind learned one crucial trick  
how to transform heat energy  
into motion.  
In the first century A.D.,  
the Greek scholar, Hero of Alexandria,  
invented steam-jet propulsion.  
Hero's ingenious device remained  
a toy until 1712  
when Thomas Newcomen developed the  
first successful steam engine  
Newcomen's engine was used to  
pump water out of coal mines.  
One hundred years passed before  
the first British-built steam  
locomotives took to the rails.

Soon the public everywhere crossed  
the threshold of a new age  
as horses were replaced by the  
latest locomotive invention.  
Today, these early engines can  
usually be seen only at museums,  
where they seem  
as distant as dinosaurs.  
The John Bull is the oldest  
operable steam engine in the world.  
To mark the 150th anniversary of  
its first American trial,  
the Smithsonian Institution  
brought it out  
for a run along  
the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.  
People who love trains dressed up  
for the occasion and gathered  
from miles around.  
Many had never heard the hoot of a  
steam whistle  
or the screech of brakes.  
Nostalgia for those seemingly  
innocent days of American history  
is very much alive today.  
For some, no doubt,  
steam engines are the attraction.  
For others, perhaps,  
it is the appeal of travel.  
Or could it be that so many share  
the romantic notion of growing up  
to be an engineer?  
These trains are called live steamers.  
Seymour Johnson loves trains so much  
that he donated land and equipment  
for a miniature railroad at his home  
in Montecito, California.  
I think in my case and in the case of  
a lot of people,  
you kind of grew up with them as toys  
and these are pretty big toys.  
I started building  
this particular engine in 1947  
and I completed it in 1951.

And that's why I have the numbers on the side-4751-to remind me of the time. Johnson and the local members of the Goleta Valley Railroad Club spent 17 years building their line. Today they test their engines on more than a mile of track. There is something nostalgic about steam engines now, of course, but the thing is, a steam locomotive is live. The engine talks to you when you're running it. You can feel what it's doing. It tells you I'm working too hard or I'm taking it easy. You can hear it in the stack, you can hear it in the sound of the blower, the sound of the fire. They've got steam engines that are over a hundred years old that continue to run. Once a year, Johnson and the club host a three-day meet that attracts model owners from all over the country. Each engine is custom-built, representing thousands of hours of meticulous machining. And as in real life, the engineers discover that steam engines can be cantankerous beasts capable of fighting back. Well, this is a 2 1/2-inch scale, narrow gauge locomotive built to run on 7 1/2-inch track. We're trying to duplicate exactly the kind of engine that the Colorado & Southern used back in the years of 1890 through 1936. Hey, John, you want to push the daylight car into the siding? The most popular daily event is

the grand tour of the line  
for families and friends.  
Three engines are coupled.  
Together they are pulling six tons  
of engines, cars, and passengers.  
We now have 14 cars.  
Mostly they're freight-car type  
because people are way out of scale.  
This train is one-eighth full size,  
but people aren't.  
So if you put them in a passenger car,  
you can't put a roof on.  
But if you put them in a freight car,  
the sky is the limit.  
Many of those who build and enjoy  
riding live steamers  
can still  
recall the old days  
when steam engines ruled the rails.  
The halcyon days of steam and  
rail began after World War 1.  
The Big Boy of the 1940s was driven  
by four pistons  
that powered 16 drive wheels.  
It was the largest steam engine  
ever built,  
and could pull a train five miles long  
And during World War II, steam engines  
transporting the freight,  
weapons, and troops to the seacoasts,  
made possible the fast buildup  
of America's war machine.  
In the 1950s, steam gave way to  
diesel and rail companies,  
competing for passengers  
promoted streamliners  
as the chic way to travel.  
But late in the decade,  
passengers shifted to automobiles  
and airplanes for long-distance travel  
and trucks took over much  
of the freight.  
The low point came in the 1970s.  
congress rescued six bankrupt



railroad by creating Conrail.  
Railroad lines were abandoned,  
and hundreds of  
stations closed for good.  
Although Americans seemed to lose  
interest in passenger train travel,  
some countries maintained their  
trains as national treasures.  
The narrow-gauge Guayaquil and  
Quito Railway in Ecuador  
plays a vital part in national life,  
and people here use the railroad  
like a party line.  
It even serves as a food market  
on wheels.  
Train buff and writer Carla Hunt  
has traveled  
throughout South America on trains.  
The Guayaquil-to-Quito run draws  
her back as the  
most exciting in South America.  
A train buff's dream  
an American-built Baldwin engine-  
a relic from 1900-begins a two-day  
climb from sea level  
to over 11,000 feet in the Andes.  
Passengers have a choice  
of three classes.  
Second class costs a dollar sixty.  
First-class cars sport padded seats  
for two dollars ten cents,  
and local vendors offer lunch  
on brown paper.  
The affluent, who ride deluxe,  
get reserved seats and meal service.  
But some prefer the roof where  
conductors seldom collect tickets.  
American engineers  
laid out the route in 1898.  
It took ten years to cut the line  
from the sugar cane fields  
of the lowlands up over the Andes.  
When the train going up fails to meet  
the train coming down

at the appointed siding,  
there's an unscheduled stop  
for a phone call to find out  
what happened to the other train.  
These trains, not only do they  
carry the people up and down,  
but they carry the mail.  
Every once in a while you see them  
with a medical prescription,  
a telex that might have come  
into Guayaquil  
but can't make it up  
between the two points.  
There is a telex facility at Tiobamba.  
But between here and Riobamba  
there is absolutely nothing.  
The train that's coming from Riobama  
has a problem in Huigra.  
One of the wheels of the machine  
was falling down off the track.  
And now we are going with this  
train to help the other train.  
So, back to Huigra.  
Ah, fantastico.  
Derailments are common,  
but the speeds are slow  
and the accidents usually minor.  
As a bonus, amateur supervisors  
get a chance to see how,  
with a minimum of equipment,  
a derailed car can be coaxed back  
onto its track.  
After a change of engines, the train  
climbs into the mountains once again.  
In the early days of the American west  
railroad builders often resorted  
to zigzagging switchbacks  
to gain altitude.  
On this line, a famous switchback  
is still in use.  
The train has proceeded  
as far as it can up the valley.  
Now it switches to another track,  
and backs up the side of Devil's Nose,

giving passengers on the rear  
platform a front-end view.  
The train backs around the mountain,  
then switches again to climb higher.  
Going forward again,  
the train has climbed  
of the mountain.  
At the end of the first day,  
the train stops at Riobamba.  
For Carla Hunt, a visit to the  
market is a fascinating  
feature of the trip.  
People come from miles around  
to sell and buy.  
You see things in this market  
you won't see anywhere else  
in Latin America.  
But more than anything else,  
I like to wander around and look  
at all those beautiful faces.  
From Riobamba to Quito,  
the train is really a bus on rails.  
There are seats inside,  
but for hardy train buffs  
like Carla Hunt,  
there is a much more  
exciting vantage point.  
The place I like to ride is up  
on the luggage rack on top.  
That's the best sightseeing seat  
in South America.  
To go through the mountains and to  
climb over the two ranges of the Andes  
to go through the beautiful  
upland villages  
with all the wild changes of  
weather on route,  
there's nothing in the world like it.  
Clouds shroud the peaks of the Andes  
as the line climbs high through cuts  
in the mountains and then descends  
to Ecuador's capital,  
the Spanish colonial city of Quito,  
to bring to an end one of the world's

most extraordinary train ride  
In the United States,  
another spectacular train ride  
inspired one train buff  
to take dramatic action.  
The line from Durango to  
Silverton, Colorado  
was threatened  
with abandonment in 1960.  
Charles Bradshaw Jr.,  
Florida citrus grower,  
rescued it in 1981.  
Like many a town in the old West,  
Durango was created by a railroad.  
The Denver & Rio Grande chose the  
site laid out the streets,  
and sold lots around the depot.  
Young people, who share Bradshaw's  
enthusiasm for trains, keep it running  
I love it. I really love it.  
I go home and tell my husband,  
I learned all kinds  
of new things today.  
I would like to be  
an engineer very much.  
You have to go through  
all the training,  
which is pretty physical for a girl  
and then you have to also a fireman,  
which shovel six ton of coal a day.  
I wouldn't want to get out of my  
limit I don't think that's right.  
My father and my grandfather  
and my great-grandfather  
were all railroaders before me.  
They worked for the Rio Grand.  
Not this particular branch.  
I'm the first one in the family to  
work for this branch of the railroad.  
None of them were conductors.  
They were all in different parts  
of the railroad,  
so I'm the first conductor  
in the family.

They have to be pretty responsible people.  
They can't be irresponsible at all.  
Aren't you pretty young to be an engineer?  
I hear that about 30 times a day.  
If I couldn't handle the job, I wouldn't be here.  
Silverton is only 45 miles from Durango,  
but to get there, the train must climb almost 3,000 feet  
In the 1870s,  
huge discoveries of ore were made in the mountains surrounding Silverton  
but there was no economical way to get the ore out.  
The railroad made the mines profitable  
The ore is now removed by truck.  
The traffic has changed,  
but the town still prospers-mining tourist dollars.  
All aboard.  
As soon as the route was completed,  
the drama of the train's traverse of the Animas River Canyon  
was recognized as one of the great sights of American railroading.  
In the early 1880s,  
photographer William Henry Jackson lowered himself into the canyon to take this picture,  
published in Harper's Weekly magazine.  
Today's passengers can still enjoy the same spectacle.  
The ride is potentially just as dangerous now as it was then.  
A derailment could topple the cars 200 feet into the gorge.  
An extraordinary train run has been preserved because of the dedication of one man and the delight that more than 100,000 people a year take in supporting the line.

Boston has its marathon;  
New Orleans its Mardi Gras.  
Britt, Iowa honors hoboes.  
Once a year, this small town invites  
hoboes from all over the country  
to drop by for a visit.  
The get-together largely attracts those  
who have retired from  
actively riding the rails  
and can now look back on their former  
rag-tag wanderings with nostalgia.  
Hoboes were not always so honored.  
Hoboing began during hard times  
after the Civil War.  
And in the Great Depression,  
the desperate once again took  
to the rails.  
Sometimes railroad police  
threw them off moving trains.  
Others jumped rather than face  
the reception they received  
when caught crossing state lines.  
If we are to protect the public  
of Southern California  
from the indigent transient class.  
They are coming here at this time,  
not for the purpose of securing work,  
but for the purpose of living  
on relief,  
stealing, or begging.  
Where is your home?  
Chicago.  
You ride a freight all the way  
from Chicago?  
Yes, sir.  
Well, you can ride, 'em back too,  
or any way you can to get back.  
We're going to see you  
over the state line.  
Don't come back to California  
until you can come in like a man.  
Hobo camps are called jungles,  
and life in them has always been hard.  
But in Britt, Iowa

the jungle is a place to  
renew friendships and swap stories.

...in '78

Yes, yes.

Yeah, I remember you.

My memory that bad?

Now wait a minute!

Every year you get older,  
you have a special privilege.

Every year you will get a little  
bit better at forgetting.

Yes. I am there already.

Hoboes are known most often  
by their nicknames.

"Steamtrain" was first elected  
hobo king in 1973.

Now we got a young goat here,  
and it's going to be  
some pretty tender eating  
when we get him all browned up here.

Yes, sir.

We'll have some of the  
best music and some of the best food  
you'll ever sit down to.

Time has reversed these hoboes' roles  
once they were outcasts.

Now Britt youngsters look up to them as  
knights of the open road  
who seem to have lived  
in a mythological age.

That's my name, see.

That's your name? Well, this is mine.

Mountain Dew. I was talking  
to the hoboqueen and she says,  
Would you like to be a hobo?  
and I said, "Sure."

And I go, How do you be a hobo?  
and she said-well, she pulled out  
this kind of perfume stuff,  
whatever it is-and she goes,  
I acquire you prince, a hobo price.

And she put some on my forehead.

So I'm a hobo prince.

And my name is "Beer-Belly Bob."

I started out when I was about 16,  
and had 12 years on and off,  
different places.  
Working irrigation ditches up  
in Washington,  
or cutting pulp wood in New York,  
doing lifeguard work down  
in Miami Beach,  
working in a gypsum plant in Yuma,  
Arizona,  
washing dishes in California  
You know, different stuff like that.  
Working in the coal mines,  
but they gave me a day shift.  
When I went in, it was dark  
and when I come out, it was dark,  
and I worked there two weeks.  
I told them  
when they put windows in there,  
I'd come back to work.  
How long did you hobo?  
From when to when?  
About, let's see, 1931 to '38.  
Something like that.  
What's the satisfaction?  
Of being free.  
Being free.  
In other words, not having to  
account to anybody for your actions.  
As the sun sets,  
the hoboes gather around a fire,  
and balladeers recall the hard days  
of depression times.  
...my wandering.  
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,  
If the railroad doesn't get you,  
then the bread lines must,  
And it looks like I'm never going  
to cease my wandering.  
When most railroad buffs  
think of trains,  
they think of passenger trains.  
But many of those most devoted  
to trains have found their life work



with the railroads.  
Whether they maintain the racks  
or work on the trains themselves,  
the big business for them is freight,  
moving everything from coal to lettuce.  
And although much of the public thinks  
railroads are a dying industry,  
in fact they are thriving.  
Deregulation has permitted them  
to abandon money-losing lines,  
and new techniques, like piggyback  
hauling of truck trailers  
and containers, attract new customers.  
The mass-market shipping of fresh  
produce by rail  
enables farmers in California  
to sell lettuce to buyers  
Lettuce harvesting has become  
an assembly-line operation-  
cutter, packer, sprayer, box-closer.  
Today's lettuce that  
we've got is probably the best  
we've had in about a week and a half.  
It's 54 to 55 pounds absolutely clean.  
Derek Derdivanis is Sales Manager of  
the Admiral Packing Company in Salinas.  
He sells lettuce by the carload  
to buyers all over the country.  
Just call us back with that order,  
will you?  
You know.  
The one you got in your back pocket.  
A refrigerator car  
holds 30,000 heads of lettuce.  
This one is bound east  
for New York City.  
The morning after the lettuce  
is picked, the Admiral lettuce car  
has been joined to a 50-car train  
called the "Salad Bowl Express."  
Five Southern Pacific engines  
are needed to pull the train  
over a 7,000-foot-high pass  
in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The route climbs toward Donner Pass.  
On average,  
and avalanches have obstructed travelers  
as long as the pass has been used.  
In November 1846, blizzards trapped  
the emigrant Donner party here.  
Thirty-five died  
of starvation and exposure.  
Some survivors resorted to cannibalism.  
In the spring of 1982,  
ten feet of snow fell in 12 days  
in the High Sierras.  
Southern Pacific stopped all trains  
across Donner Pass.  
Diverting traffic cost \$100,000 a day.  
Snow fighters tried to keep  
the lines open  
with spreaders-snow plows that push  
the huge drifts to the side.  
But when the snow drifts too deep,  
spreaders stall  
and the pushing wings collapse.  
The nerve center of the railroad's  
fight is a community of houses  
and offices connected by tunnels  
so buried in snow that  
it is call "Mole Town."  
Here a hundred men and women  
work day and night.  
Norden operator.  
Everything's in the clear  
on the Number Two?  
How about the rotary?  
Rotary's in the clear  
on the Number Two...  
Management calls for its ultimate  
snow-fighting machines-rotary plows  
that can dig through almost  
any accumulation of snow.  
...that engine's being held right now.  
The rotary is going on down  
to the other end of the siding.  
Throwing five tons of snow a minute,  
the rotary can literally dig

a trench deeper than itself.  
As one rotary chews toward the top of  
the pass from the west,  
another struggles up from the east.  
The first train comes through.  
Beyond the Sierras,  
the "Salad Bowl Express"  
drops into the desert,  
and a new crew takes over.  
On the long, straight runs,  
there's time for shared stories and  
for trainmen to enjoy the camaraderie  
which is part of the attraction  
they feel for their work.  
I don't think it's dawned on me  
yet that I've had a kid.  
I'm still in shock from it.  
Went in Sunday night.  
Had it Monday morning.  
Last couple of days  
have been pretty busy for me.  
I was lucky.  
Generally the railroad doesn't  
allow you to be in town.  
They keep you away  
from home quite often.  
So I was pretty lucky to be home  
when it happened.  
In 1950,  
I was on a  
high-speed perishables train,  
and a passenger train come out  
of a side track in front of us.  
We hit him head  
on about 52 mile an hour.  
The engineer on the other train  
was killed.  
I'm very lucky to be here.  
Now that scared me.  
By evening,  
the train is in eastern Nevada.  
The next morning,  
now with a Union Pacific  
engine and crew,

the "Salad Bowl Express" climbs toward  
the Continental Divide.  
Around a curve, Castle Rock,  
a well-known American landmark,  
comes into view.  
The famous photographer A.J. Russell  
captured this same scene  
when the transcontinental railroad  
was nearing completion.  
In 1867, it took three months to cross  
by wagon from the railheads  
on the Missouri River  
to the Pacific Coast.  
The new rail line cut that time  
to less than a week.  
Irish immigrants living  
in railroad car dormitories built west.  
Chinese coolies built east.  
It was the most dramatic engineering  
accomplishment of the century.  
Gorges were spanned, mountains cut  
through or tunneled under.  
An army of workers fought summer heat  
and winter snow  
at a cost of uncounted lives.  
There were no movie cameras to record  
the great undertaking,  
but once movies were invented,  
filmmakers recreated the drama  
in classic films;  
John Ford's the Iron Horse  
and Cecil B. DeMille's Union Pacific.  
Crossing the mountains,  
the deserts, and plains,  
Fighting the heat,  
the cold, and the rain,  
Summer to autumn, winter to spring,  
Bring 'em up, lay 'em down,  
make the hammers ring,  
Building a new road under the wheel,  
Bind up the earth in iron and steel,  
Working east, working west,  
we're building our way,  
On bad food, hard liquor,

and a dollar a day.  
It was a day of national celebration  
when the two lines met  
at Promontory, Utah.  
A.J. Russell recorded the scene  
in what is perhaps  
the most famous photograph  
in American history.  
And in 1924,  
when John Ford recreated the scene  
for his film,  
he based the action  
on the photographer to pose the crowd.  
The joining of America's East and West  
by rail is even more important today.  
The "Salad Bowl Express" is only one  
of 60 to 70 trains a day  
moving across the nation  
on this one line.  
Now, near the end of its second day,  
the "Salad Bowl Express" comes under  
the traffic control  
of dispatchers  
at North Platte, Nebraska.  
Here three men per shift control  
every train  
on the 245 miles of track diagrammed  
on the walls.  
They decide which trains get priority  
on the lines.  
The "Salad Bowl Express"  
is rushed along.  
Midnight. The "Salad Bowl Express"  
arrives at North Platte.  
Some cars will be sent south  
and eastward on other lines.  
Other cars will be added.  
The freight cars are pushed up a hump  
and separated.  
Gravity powers them down the slope.  
The tracks divide again and again.  
Automatic sensors weigh the cars  
and retarders brake them.  
There are 221 miles of track

in the yard.  
And as many as 5,000 freight cars  
at a time.  
By 4 a.m.,  
a new train has been made up,  
a new crew comes aboard,  
and the train moves on.  
In the afternoon,  
the train crosses the Missouri River.  
Operated now by Chicago  
and North Western railroad,  
it traverses the rich farmlands  
of Iowa.  
The next morning,  
the train is in Chicago.  
Marshaling yards like this one  
are dangerous places.  
You have to watch for cars  
coming from both directions.  
There could be debris sticking  
out of the car.  
Try not go get caught in a situation  
where you have trains moving  
at high speed in both directions  
on each side of you.  
If you do have a tendency  
to feel dizzy, lay down on the ground.  
You could reel under the car.  
Despite railroad emphasis on safety,  
there is an average of 15 deaths  
and 6,700 injuries  
to American rail-yard workers  
each year.  
Danger for railroaders comes not only  
from the trains themselves.  
In the early days,  
desperadoes like Jesse James,  
Butch Cassidy,  
and the Sundance kid held up trains  
in the lonely plains and mountains  
of the West.  
Today, trains are most often attacked  
as they pass through depressed areas  
We had one conductor-they got him with

a gun and robbed him at Park Manor.  
It's just a few things that we go  
through out here.  
Everybody thinks  
we've got such a swell job.  
We have our ups and downs, too.  
This is our most dangerous spot  
of the trip.  
They put different articles  
on the tracks to derail us.  
They put old truck tires  
so they'll break the air hoses in two.  
They'll throw beer bottles,  
anything they can get their hands on.  
We've been shot at.  
They shot at me five times  
through the cabooses windows.  
I've got pictures of the holes.  
It was either a .38 or a .45  
because it put big holes.  
Sometimes they do it to rob the train.  
They break us in two to rob us,  
so they can take things off of us.  
On the cabooses they have...  
No, I know all about it.  
He's going to throw.  
No, he's not either.  
Oh, we go through this every day.  
It's nothing new to us.  
The many dedicated men and women  
who are drawn to railroad work  
also live with the danger that goes  
with the job.  
The "Salad Bowl Express" rolls through  
the heartland  
of the industrial Middle West.  
On the fifth morning,  
the train parallels the Mohawk River.  
Now under Conrail control,  
it follows the same route taken  
in 1825 by the Erie Canal.  
Early on the sixth morning,  
the "Salad Bowl Express" arrives at  
its destination in the Bronx.

Ten carloads of produce are unloaded  
at Hunts Point Terminal each day.  
The carload of lettuce from Salinas  
has been bought by the Armata family,  
wholesalers who in turn  
sell to markets and restaurants.  
Beautiful box of lettuce.  
As my father would say,  
It talks to you.  
As soon as you open up the box...  
It has been seven days  
since the lettuce was picked.  
It took four railroads  
and the involvement of 1,000 men  
and women  
to move it across the country.  
Half a million people work for  
the railroads in the United States.  
In one sense, theirs is just a job,  
but it is an essential job,  
moving the grain, steel,  
coal, automobiles,  
perishables-even the lettuce for  
a PTA luncheon in Baldwin, Long Island.  
Traditionally, little boys  
were given model trains for Christmas  
and, captured by a dream, many grew up  
wanting to become an engineer.  
The reality today is not far different.  
For a new class of 23 engineers,  
the Long Island Railroad  
had 2,000 applicants to choose from.  
Now to get the train moving,  
you'll need to reverse.  
You're in forward.  
This position.  
This is your throttle.  
Now we'll go in eight notch.  
Alright, blow the whistle.  
Dave Decker, senior instructor,  
has been an engineer for 14 years.  
Decker loves engineering and teaching,  
but the memory of train accidents  
in his past brings a special urgency



to his teaching.

Engineering used to be a man's job,  
but Federal affirmative action  
guidelines give Vita Zamboli,  
a former secretary, and extraordinary  
opportunity to join  
an elite group of railroad employees.

I can teach an engineer how to make  
a proper brake application  
and accelerate, decelerate.

That's the easy part.

My most difficult responsibility is to  
instill into an upcoming engineer  
that they have  
monumental responsibilities.

There is no margin for error.

Not when you are dealing  
with 1,600 people behind you.

Hopefully, I can bring this across  
to these upcoming engineers.

Are you relaxed?

A little damp.

Alright. That's good.

That means you've got guts.

If you're not nervous in here,  
there is something wrong.

How do you feel?

Are you coming in strong?

As she brings the train into a station  
Vita must learn the right timing  
how strongly to apply the brakes  
so as not to stop too soon  
or overrun the station.

Okay.

Now what you want to do is bear  
off the last second.

No, no, not this.

Right, bear it off.

Super.

You want that feel of this thing  
charging into the station  
and making your initial application  
and then your final application.

You ever run a train before?

Huh? Never?  
You did a heck of a job.  
What do you think? What do you feel?  
You feel that this...  
It was exciting. It was great...  
...is this going to be  
your occupation or what?  
Yes, it is.  
Yes.  
I'm sure it's going to take a while.  
But I will get the feeling  
of bringing a train in.  
There are going to be times  
in your career  
when you are going to run across  
a grade crossing accident.  
You're traveling along at 65,  
and a car comes around a gate  
or through the gates.  
There's not a thing you can do.  
You hope you give pre-warning,  
that a warning whistle or warning bell  
before you get to  
that crossing are ample.  
You'll search your soul to know  
whether you did it or not.  
It's not just the glory of  
running over the road and to say,  
I always wanted to be an engineer.  
Now I have that.  
It's that you have to take  
that responsibility.  
If her engineering career  
follows the norm,  
Vital will face 500,000 road  
crossings in the next 25 years.  
If she is never involved  
in an accident,  
passengers who ride her trains will  
have no reason to learn her name.  
There are many great train rides  
around the world,  
but not one can match  
the aura of elegance,

mystery, and romance surrounding  
the name-Orient Express.  
It ran for almost a century until its  
demise in 1977.  
Now two men have revived  
the historic run to Istanbul.  
Albert Glatt bought  
the 1920s-vintage cars  
and lovingly refurbished them.  
Sometimes, you know,  
you have to do everything on the train  
T.C. Swartz chartered the cars for  
those who could afford to recapture  
the glory of rail travel in its heyday.  
...and then how to surpass it.  
People's idea of luxury  
is a little bit different  
than maybe what is actually was.  
So we're trying to do now  
is to give them more luxury  
than they had in the past.  
In fact, to make it the ultimate trip.  
I can't believe it,  
Oh, it's marvelous.  
There will be 98 passengers  
on this trip,  
each paying a modest \$5,000 one way.  
I think the dogs are great.  
...great, but they are...  
Yeah, but I can't see them sitting  
in the dining car.  
Some passengers, like actor Hal Linden  
and his wife,  
stage an arrival  
in the grand tradition,  
harking back to the aura  
of a princely trip.  
Original inlaid wood decorations  
and Lalique molded glass reliefs  
still decorate the cars.  
Names of the countries the  
Orient Express passes through  
Austria, Hungary, Romania,  
Bulgaria-ring with romance.

Memories of mysteries like Murder on  
the Orient Express surround  
the passengers with an atmosphere  
of champagne and dreams.  
Well, my name is Otto.  
And I'm supposed to play the  
piano all the way to Istanbul.  
It seems like everything that's  
wonderful about  
the world is going away,  
and the trains are one of those things  
Kim Vosper and Kyle Collins advanced  
the date of their wedding  
so they could make this their first  
trip together as a married couple.  
For bourgeois travelers,  
meals in an aristocratic French style  
the ultimate temptation for  
those who count calories.  
I remember as a child we used to put  
people on the train in New Iberia.  
And I was never sad because  
they were leaving.  
I was always sad because  
I wasn't leaving too,  
but I wasn't standing on the back  
platform when I'm waving goodbye.  
I think I was six or seven when  
I took my first train ride.  
From that time on, I think I fell  
in love with trains.  
And then I heard that you could spend  
four-and-a-half days on a train  
that sold me on this trip.  
The train cruises Europe like  
an ocean liner.  
Gypsies play as they did on the  
first run of the Orient Express.  
In the evenings, there are gala  
seven-course dinners.  
And occasionally the train waits  
as passengers are bused  
to the entertainment.  
A champagne tasting at the

Mumm's winery in France.  
And just as on its maiden voyage,  
there is a festive reception  
in Budapest.  
On the first trip, no passengers on  
the Orient Express  
dined at the hunting lodge  
of the sultan.  
It is an express journey to the sun,  
but the high point for  
many comes in Vienna  
where the Vienna Boys' Choir is only  
a part of the entertainment.  
Protocol prevented the Austrian  
royal family from  
receiving plebian passengers  
of the first Orient Express  
Now the Pallavicini Palace  
is theirs for the evening.  
And finally, the end of the  
line-Istanbul, Turkey-  
where passengers get the  
red-carpet treatment, Oriental style.  
For the 98 passengers of the  
Orient Express,  
the trip will remain an extraordinary  
adventure into the romance of rails.  
But the Orient Express has  
no monopoly on beauty.  
There are grand adventures for  
everyone in a rediscovery  
of travel by train.  
Amtrak's Crescent,  
with newly rebuilt equipment,  
races like a speeding ship across  
Lake Pontchartrain in Louisiana.  
The Great Plains offer the same  
sweeping vistas that challenged  
the pioneers so long ago.  
There are majestic views of the Rockies  
on the Canadian transcontinental route  
The San Diegan is a beachcomber  
from Los Angeles to San Diego.  
In the future, new trains traveling

for the run between  
Los Angeles and San Diego,  
and that is only the beginning.  
Extraordinary experimental trains  
may some day revolutionize land travel.  
For those who love trains,  
whether as engineer,  
hobo, or passenger,  
there's an appreciation due  
for the song-writer's line:  
It's got to be the going and  
not the getting there that's good.