



## New Concession Car, Nearing Completion, Will Serve Passengers in Climate-Controlled Comfort

The Austin & Texas Central's new concession car, dubbed *Cedar Park* in honor of the railroad's hometown, is slated to go into service by year's end after more than two years of restoration work.

The streamlined, climate-controlled car started life as Santa Fe coach No. 3163, and was acquired by ASTA in 2013. Since its beginning, the A&TC has always offered passengers a car in which they could buy souvenirs, beverages and snacks while traveling.

Sporting a completely redesigned and constructed interior, *Cedar Park* replaces the railroad's original concession car, a converted 1920s-era Pennsylvania Railroad P70 coach that lacked heating or cooling, with predictable discomfort in Texas winters and summers.

(The old car, named *Lake Austin*, departed the railroad last July when it and all of the A&TC's P70 fleet were retired and sold. In the interim, concession service for passengers has been provided aboard *Eagle Cliff*, a Missouri Pacific parlor-sleeper leased from ASTA Director Bert Dockall.)

Since February, conversion of *Cedar Park* into the new concession car has been under the direction of ASTA Director Joe Pinnelli, an Austin preservation contractor whose experience includes renovation of passenger cars.

Joe reports that new wooden cabinetry is nearly complete, and that new windows and interior trim work are being installed. Electricians are running wire throughout the car, and period roller window



Brand-new wooden cabinetry by carpenter Bill Johnson in the coach-turned-concession-car *Cedar Park*, where it will serve passengers with snacks, beverages and souvenirs.

shades are being installed.

He said the car's new air-conditioning equipment has been delivered and is ready for installation, as is a new Microphor toilet system and sound system.

Restoration of *Cedar Park* began in 2015 with a fresh paint job (preceded by laborious removal of old paint) and new flooring installed by ASTA volunteers and staff. Volunteers instrumental in the work have included Dave Shannon, Ryan Rasmussen, Jimmie Burleyson, Chuck Hamsa, Joe Shreve and Bert Dockall.

Built in 1950, car No. 3163 was part of an order by the Santa Fe of cars for its *San Diegan* service between Los Angeles and San Diego. The cars were built by the Budd Company, whose solid stainless-steel cars were renowned for their strength and resistance to rust and corrosion.

ASTA bought the car in conjunction with another

Santa Fe coach from the same trainset, No. 3160, which will be restored for service at some later date.

Purchase of the new concession car, and much of the restoration work, were made possible by a \$25,000 grant from the Burdine Johnson Foundation, \$24,331 from the City of Cedar Park, and \$2,500 from the Texas Historical Foundation. Additional funding has come from ASTA reserves and individual donations.

Project leader Pinnelli cited the contributions to the effort of ASTA volunteers and staff, as well as the work of contractors Steve Laube on the window glass and Bill Johnson on construction of cabinetry.

Joe's experience with railroad passenger equipment began in 1990 with a partnership with renowned private-car operator Randy Parten in restoring the interiors of nine vintage passenger cars.



Glass expert Steve Laube, left, assisted by son Steve Jr., installs a rubber gasket around one of the *Cedar Park*'s 26 new windows. The car's Santa-Fe-themed paint scheme is evident.

# Thanks to our generous friends!

(Donations from August through October 2016. If we have left anyone off, please accept our apologies and contact us at [director@austinsteamt-train.org](mailto:director@austinsteamt-train.org) so we can make sure we recognize you in our next edition.)

## Contributors to Our New Concession Car:

### **\$1,000 to \$2,499:**

Roger and Jeannie Shull

### **\$50 to \$99:**

Vicki Baughman  
Zena and Chris Vaughn

## Contributors to Steam Engine 786:

### **\$1,000 to \$2,499:**

The Lengel Family Fund

### **\$100 to \$249:**

Vicki Hernandez

### **\$50 to \$99:**

Roger and Joanne Scarborough  
Jim and Jill Wadlow

## Our Faithful Member-Donors!

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James Neves

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Richard and Suzanne Hall  
William L. Hanks  
*(In memory of Kent Rider)*  
West Lake Beach

### **\$40 to \$99:**

Sandra S. Bosley  
*(In memory of Kent Rider)*

James D. Spates

### **\$20 to \$39:**

Cathy Brandewie  
*(In honor of Larry McGinnis)*

## Contributors to Our Onboard PA System:

### **\$750:**

Bert Dockall  
David and Laura Gracy  
Dennis A. Kearns  
Larry McGinnis  
Joe Pinelli  
Ben Sargent  
Robert W. Schoen Jr., M.D.  
Lil and Pat Serafine  
Brian J. Smith

# 2017 Schedule Features Old Favorites Plus Exciting New Offerings

The A&TC's train schedule for the new year will include a record 115 trains, ranging from traditional favorites such as the *Hill Country Flyer* to our new cocktail specials!

## **JANUARY**

- 7. Hill Country Flyer.
- 14. Hill Country Flyer.
- 21. Hill Country Flyer.
- 28. Hill Country Flyer, and Moonlight & Mimosas.

## **FEBRUARY**

- 4. Hill Country Flyer.
- 11. Valentine's Day Flyer, and Wine Flyer.
- 18. Hill Country Flyer.
- 25. Hill Country Flyer, and Murder Mystery.

## **MARCH**

- 4. Hill Country Flyer.
- 5. Bertram Flyer.
- 11. Hill Country Flyer.
- 12. Bertram Flyer.
- 14-15-16. Spring Break Flyers.
- 18. Hill Country Flyer, and Beer

Train.

- 25. Hill Country Flyer.
- 26. Bertram Flyer.

## **APRIL**

- 1. Hill Country Flyer.
- 2. Brunch Train.
- 8-9. Bluebonnet Festival.
- 15. Hill Country Flyer.
- 22. Hill Country Flyer.
- 23. Super Hero Train.
- 29. Hill Country Flyer.
- 30. Princess Flyer.

## **MAY**

- 6. Hill Country Flyer, and Signature Cocktail Series.
- 13. Hill Country Flyer.
- 14. Mother's Day Flyer.
- 20. Hill Country Flyer.
- 21. Bertram Flyer.
- 27. Hill Country Flyer.
- 28. Bertram Flyer.

## **JUNE**

- 3. Hill Country Flyer.
- 4. Bertram Flyer.
- 10. Burnet County Fair.
- 11. Bertram Flyer.

- 12. Hill Country Flyer, and Beer Train.
- 18. Father's Day Train.
- 21-22. Summertime Trains.
- 24. Hill Country Flyer.
- 25. Bertram Flyer.

## **JULY**

- 1. Independence Day Express, and Beer Train.
- 8. Bertram Flyer, and Sunset Express.
- 15. Bertram Flyer, and Sunset Express.
- 19-20. Summertime Trains.
- 22. Bertram Flyer, and Murder Mystery.
- 29. Bertram Flyer, and Sunset Express.

## **AUGUST**

- 5. Super Hero Train, and Sunset Express.
- 12. Bertram Flyer, and Sunset Express.
- 19. Princess Flyer, and Sunset Express.
- 26. Bertram Flyer, and Signature Cocktail Series.

## **SEPTEMBER**

- 2. Hill Country Flyer.
- 9. Hill Country Flyer, and Wine Flyer.
- 16. Hill Country Flyer, and Beer Train.
- 23. Hill Country Flyer.
- 29-30. Day Out With Thomas.

## **OCTOBER**

- 1. Day Out With Thomas.
- 7. Hill Country Flyer.
- 14. Hill Country Flyer.
- 15. Pumpkin Express.
- 21. Hill Country Flyer, and Murder Mystery.
- 22. Reading on the Rails.
- 28. Halloween Express, and Murder Mystery.
- 29. Pumpkin Express.

## **NOVEMBER**

- 4. Hill Country Flyer.
- 11. Hill Country Flyer, and Beer Train.
- 12. Veterans Day Flyer.
- 18. Hill Country Flyer.
- 19. Bertram Flyer.
- 25-26. North Pole Flyers.

## **DECEMBER**

- 2-3. North Pole Flyers.
- 9-10. North Pole Flyers.
- 16-17. North Pole Flyers.

# Burlington Northern Santa Fe Was Instrumental in Bringing the A&TC Its New Diesel 605

The A&TC's newest diesel, Belt Railway of Chicago 605, is in Cedar Park Yard being readied for service, and ASTA has the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway to thank for seeing her safely to her new home.

With the help of BNSF Director of Public Affairs Gus Melonas and other BNSF officials, the Alco C424 engine was transported in February from her previous home in Arkansas to Cedar Park, the move being generously donated by BNSF.

ASTA board members Larry McGinnis and Dennis Kearns were instrumental in arranging the move. Said Larry, "BNSF's operations people were very helpful in working with us on the logistics of the move and keeping us informed on where the engine was while en route."

The 130-ton 605 was moved from Springdale, Ark., on the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad, to the BNSF interchange at Monett, Mo. From there, BNSF delivered it to Tulsa, where it awaited inclusion in a Texas-bound train.

The engine then moved through Fort Worth and Temple to McNeil, north of Austin, where she was delivered into the A&TC's hands.

Before she can join A&TC 442, a sister Alco, in active service, 605 is undergoing some final refurbishment, including new batteries and other electrical equipment, a crankcase exhaustor and fuel pump, and most significantly, installation of a rebuilt air compressor.

No. 605 was purchased from Ed Bowers, the Houston-area owner of Vintage Locomotives Inc., for \$50,000. With the acquisition of the new power, the

A&TC's roster of engines will remain entirely made up of Alco (American Locomotive Co.) products, including our 1916 steam engine, Southern Pacific 786.

605 was built for the Belt Railway in 1966. Largest terminal switching road in the U.S., the Belt Railway bought six of the C424s, part of Alco's famous "Century" series with which the company closed out production of diesels in 1970.

Although 605 has four-wheel trucks in contrast to 442's six-wheel trucks, the newer engine was built extra heavy for freight-transfer service, and both engines generate the same 2,400 horsepower.



BRC 605 at the Cedar Park depot, shortly after her arrival from Arkansas. The C424 class, one of the last built by Alco, were renowned as heavy haulers for a number of roads.

## Ticket Counter Which Once Graced Famed Hotel Now Graces ASTA's Cedar Park Museum

It was once a standard amenity for the lobby of any first class hotel—a counter at which guests could buy railroad tickets, just as today one can obtain airline boarding passes without leaving the hotel.

Such a counter, which once stood in the lobby of the storied St. Francis Hotel on Union Square in San Francisco, has been donated to ASTA's collection of historic railroad items and installed in

our Cedar Park museum.

The solid-wood counter was a generous donation from former ASTA director and volunteer Andy Fish, longtime managing partner of Texas Legislative Service.

Andy said he obtained the 13-foot-long counter from a friend about 20 years ago with the idea of installing it in his home, but the necessary space was unavailable and the counter rested in storage.

He said the counter was completely overhauled and refinished by noted woodworker and artist Günther Oswald, a German immigrant who worked in Oak Hill until his death in 2014.

Moving the 1,200-pound item from South Austin to Cedar Park was adroitly handled by All Trades Moving.

The counter includes 27 drawers with interior dividers where tickets were sorted and stored. ASTA's museum will use the top of the unit for display items, and the drawers for storage of small items in the collection.

*For the fun, or for the satisfaction of a job well done...*

### Become an ASTA Volunteer!

It's simple....call our volunteer coordinator, Rachel Naron, at 512-477-8468 ext. 1, e-mail [volunteers@austin-steamtrain.org](mailto:volunteers@austin-steamtrain.org) or come by our office, 401 E. Whitestone, Suite C-100, Cedar Park.



The growing collection of historic railroad items in ASTA's Cedar Park museum grew in a big way with the installation of this ticket counter, a relic of San Francisco's St. Francis Hotel.

## Volunteer Chuck "Papa Noel" Hamsa Departs at 78

Chuck Hamsa, an ASTA volunteer for eight years, died Nov. 28 at age 78.

Always a friendly and reliable presence in the volunteer corps, the white-bearded Chuck is particularly remembered for his turns as "Papa Noel" on board North Pole Flyers of earlier years.

Chuck was born in Omaha in 1938, was a Navy veteran and a graduate of the University of Omaha, and also earned graduate degrees in library science and Latin American history.

For 30 years, until his retirement in 1999, he served as acquisition librarian for the Dupre Library of the University of Southwest Louisiana in Lafayette. He was one



of the founders of Acadian Village in Lafayette, a re-creation of south Louisiana's early French settlements, where he created his famous "Papa Noel" character, complete with his own costume.

Chuck and his wife Sara, also an ASTA volunteer, moved to Cedar Park in 2007 and became volunteers a year later. He also served on Cedar Park's Tourism Advisory Board.

Besides Sara, he is survived by a son, Michael, and three grandchildren.

## Volunteers Recognized for Years of Service

ASTA volunteers at their annual year-end celebration marked another safe and successful year of train service, and recognized 25 of their number who had reached significant service anniversaries. *Thanks and congratulations!*

### 25 Years

Mike Barnes  
Jerry Elder  
Jerry Hieber  
Clif Jones  
Bill Nash  
Sandy Sanford

Sandra Norris  
Steffon Norris  
Gregg Squires  
Phyllis Squires

### 1 Year

Joe Alexander  
Melissa Baker  
Cassidy Bodisch  
Ed Bradford  
Daniel Breest  
Logan Breest  
Jeff Giamfortone  
Randy Leo  
Mike Martin  
Micki Scott

### 10 Years

Shannon Barrow  
Nathan Talbot  
Kirk Yoshida

### 5 Years

Charlie DeWeese  
Walt Grey

A Special Thanks to Our Friends and Supporters,  
the City of Cedar Park and Cedar Park Tourism Services!



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