



A Resilient Railroad

This past year has brought challenges we never could have anticipated. From repairing a critical part on our power car to navigating the devastating Central Texas floods that damaged our tracks and brought unexpected financial loss, we have been tested in countless ways. Yet through it all, one truth remains clear: we are a resilient railroad, and we are here for our community.

Part of being a community institution means supporting the good work of others. We are proud to partner with and uplift organizations like Texas Search and Rescue, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas, and Center for Child Protection to name a few, whose efforts strengthen families across Central Texas.

At the same time, we continue to offer programs that bring families together on board our train. Whether it's the Hill Country Flyer or the Lotería Train, every ride is designed to spark joy, connection, and memories that will last a lifetime.

We remain firmly committed to keeping railroad history alive. Every restoration, repair, and investment in our train ensures that families today – and generations to come – can continue to experience the wonder of riding aboard a piece of American history.

None of this would be possible without the steadfast dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors. Your support keeps us moving forward, no matter the challenges. As you read on, we invite you to learn more about the impact your contributions have made and the ways you can help us carry our mission into the future.



Austin Steam Train Association

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The Power of Community

This July, devastating floods swept through Central Texas, leaving families and communities reeling from unimaginable loss. Our hearts remain with all who were impacted. While the damage was greater for those who lost homes and loved ones in the flood, the Austin Steam Train Association felt the effects firsthand when the trestle over the San Gabriel River was partially washed out, causing us to temporarily cease operations. Thanks to the swift action of our partners at Capital Metro and WATCO, repairs were completed within two months and we were able to pivot our schedule to take passengers along the Lakeline Express and host stationary events on our train and platform while they were ongoing. We are forever grateful for those partnerships that helped us recover some of the lost revenue during that time.

In the days that followed the flood, we looked not only inward, to adjust our operations while repairs were underway, but also outward, to ask how we could best support our neighbors. Together with you, our community, we rallied around Texas Search and Rescue (TEXSAR), a volunteer-led organization on the front lines of flood relief and recovery. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we were able to contribute to TEXSAR's critical work and help affected communities heal.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us in these efforts—whether by donating, attending an event, or simply sending words of encouragement. Like the cars of a train linked together, we are strongest when we move forward side by side. Thanks to your support, ASTA was able not only to navigate the challenges the floods brought to our railroad, but also to stand in solidarity with the people of Central Texas when it mattered most.

To learn more about TEXSAR, visit <https://www.texasar.org>.



2025 Best of Austin Winner

For the first time ever, we were honored to be named a **Best of Austin winner** by the readers of the Austin Chronicle! We won in the **"Kids & Family Wild Card"** category for our kid-friendly train rides, and we are both humbled and proud to be considered such a cherished part of family life in Central Texas. **Thank you for supporting us** and making moments like these possible.

Superstar Spotlight

We'd like to thank our highest tiers of members who make commitments to support us every month at the highest levels: **Ben Sargent, Beth Renstrom, Brian Thompson, Caryn Price, Doc Schoen, John Serold, Larry McGinnis, Marc Opperman, and Steve Hanson**. Their steady support is crucial to the going operations of our organization. If you'd like to be a featured member, *visit our website to learn how!*

We'd also like to extend **a special thank you to the volunteers** who stepped up and helped us this past summer while we endured many changes. From **stationary events** to **Lakeline Expresses**, we truly wouldn't have made it through July without their dedication. If you would like to become a volunteer, *visit our website to apply!*

Keeping History on Track

This year has been a busy one for the Austin Steam Train Association, with several restoration milestones bringing new life and fresh energy to our fleet. Each project – whether it involved heavy mechanical work, a careful polish, or even a change of identity – reminded us of the dedication and teamwork that make this organization so special.



One of the biggest undertakings was the reassembly of the rear truck for our ALCO 442 locomotive.

With the help of a crane and a skilled crew, massive components were carefully lifted, aligned, and fitted together. Piece by piece, the truck began to take shape again, and the sight of it coming back together marked a major step forward in the 442's ongoing restoration.



Meanwhile, two of our most faithful passenger coaches – the Buckeye Lake and the Buckeye Trail – were due for some much-needed attention. After decades of service and plenty of Texas sun, their paint had begun to lose its shine. Our volunteers experimented with different approaches to revive the color, and finally found a solution that brought the Buckeyes back to life. With their sides now polished and gleaming, the coaches are once again looking their best as they continue to carry passengers on weekend excursions. A fresh coat of paint on their roofs will come soon when the weather is cooler.

Another exciting development came with our GP40-3 locomotive, which ASTA officially purchased after leasing it for several years. Once the old markings were removed, our team faced the question of what new identity it should take on. After much discussion, we decided to honor its history by restoring its original number – 3118 – dating back to its Penn Central days. The new look quickly grew on everyone, and "ATCX 3118" has already become a familiar sight and sound on our excursions.

Together, these milestones showcase the heart of our mission: preserving and celebrating railroad history while keeping it alive for today's passengers. None of this work would be possible without the dedicated volunteers who put in the hours, or without the support of our community who believes in what we do. Every restoration project, polished coach, and locomotive that rolls out of our yard carries a piece of history forward—and we're grateful to share that journey with you.



Your support makes this happen!

Thank you to all our supporters who have helped make these projects possible. As a volunteer-led nonprofit, we depend on friends like you to keep restoration efforts moving forward.

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO
DONATE TODAY AND HELP
BRING MORE HISTORIC
RAILROAD EQUIPMENT
BACK TO LIFE!**





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The CALL BOARD

Newsletter of the Austin Steam Train Association



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Share the wonder of the railroad
with children who need it most!

At the Austin Steam Train Association, giving back is at the heart of what we do. For many **families in our community facing hardship**, having the time, energy, or resources for experiences like historic train rides can feel out of reach. That's why we created the Wheels of Wonder (WOW) program—to bring the joy of the railroad to children who need it most.

Through WOW, we offer all-expense-paid train rides that foster connection, create joy, and open doors to experiences otherwise unavailable. We proudly partner with Ronald **McDonald House Charities of Central Texas**, **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas**, and **the Williamson County Child Advocacy Center** to make these magical journeys possible for children and families in our community.

We believe that history, adventure, and joy belong to everyone. *Make a donation to sponsor a wonder and together, we can ensure that every child has the chance to experience the wonder of the rails!*

CLICK OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO SPONSOR A
WONDER FOR A CHILD IN OUR COMMUNITY!

