



From the Office of Secretary of State

John Gale

402-471-2554

www.sos.ne.gov

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Contact: Laura Strimple

402-471-8408

laura.strimple@nebraska.gov

Secretary Gale congratulates Union Pacific Railroad on 150 years of service

Long before planes, there were trains. And as we reach the close of 2012, we are also reaching the end of a year-long celebration marking Union Pacific Railroad's 150th anniversary.

All Nebraskans are proud to claim Union Pacific as a Nebraska enterprise and to celebrate its deep and strong ties to our state's rich history and its future.

In my own family, my grandfather John C. Gale was known as "Iron Hat" during his years as Chief Special Agent for Union Pacific. He was a good friend and close associate of William Jeffers, a legendary figure as President of Union Pacific. My grandfather later served as General Manager of the railroad during WWII. We are immensely proud of his legacy in our family.

When passenger trains came into vogue, my family used Union Station in Omaha to come and go in-state or out-of-state. At that time, train travel was not only fashionable, it was also quite memorable. The noise and sense of excitement were overwhelming. Union Station moved thousands of passengers every day.

In the large terminal you could hear and see the bustling of baggage handlers and uniformed conductors. There were loud broadcasts for the trains arriving and departing. There was also a steady stream of people making their way to their appropriate trains, talking and shouting and saying their goodbyes.

Once on the platform, you encountered those huge, hissing steam engines pulling passenger and dining cars. They were awesome and inspiring; large black

behemoths with bright lights, and enormous wheels and rods. In a moment's notice they were ready to muscle their way down the long steel tracks. To a kid those engines were majestic and thrilling. They were a real feat of engineering.

Union Pacific Railroad remains one of American's largest Fortune 500 companies. It continues to hold a significant presence in our nation and in Nebraska. Besides the home office in Omaha, the Bailey Yard in North Platte is the largest railroad classification yard in the world.

Union Pacific Railroad was instrumental in World Wars I and II – moving millions of military personnel from coast to coast for deployment and transporting vast quantities of armaments and supplies. Millions of service men and women made their way through the North Platte Canteen; greeted by volunteers who served them sandwiches, cakes and cookies before moving on to their next destination.

In September, my wife Carol and I were invited back to North Platte to take part in the 150th Rail Fest celebration. It brought back a lot of memories.

I am proud to know the small role my family played in the history of Union Pacific, as well as the contributions of generations of officers, managers and skilled workers over the past 150 years. I symbolically tip my grandfather's "Iron Hat" to those who continue to make America's "Great Big Rolling Railroad" what it is today.

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