



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH NIDA OBERT / SPECIAL TO THE PIONEER PRESS

The 132-foot Big Boy No. 4014 was one of 20 delivered by the American Locomotive Company in Schenectady, N.Y., in 1941 — an additional five were delivered in 1944 to support the war effort and increased freight demand — and hadn't run since being retired from service in 1959.

## Coming 'round the bend ...

Historic steam locomotive Big Boy No. 4014 left Wyoming in May and arrives in St. Paul this week

By Elizabeth Nida Obert  
Special to the Pioneer Press

Wyoming is a long way to travel from Rochester, Minn., to see a train. But this wasn't just any train.

The Union Pacific Railroad recently celebrated the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; the construction of the railroad across the United States is considered one of the most historic events of the 1800s.

As part of that celebration, a skilled steam-shop crew of nine led by Union Pacific heritage operations senior manager Ed Dickens — a hero to many in the train engineering world — restored one of the largest steam locomotives ever built: the 1.2 million-pound Big Boy No. 4014. It was the train my husband, who had been dreaming about this very moment, and I came to Wyoming to see.

"What a machine," said Cary Dickens of Kersey, Colo., who described the official public debut of the massive and iconic beauty on the morning of May 4 at the Cheyenne Depot Museum in Wyoming as "one of the biggest thrills of my lifetime."

Cary, Ed Dickens' uncle, noted his amazement at what the small crew had accomplished. "This is more than a national treasure. This is an international treasure."

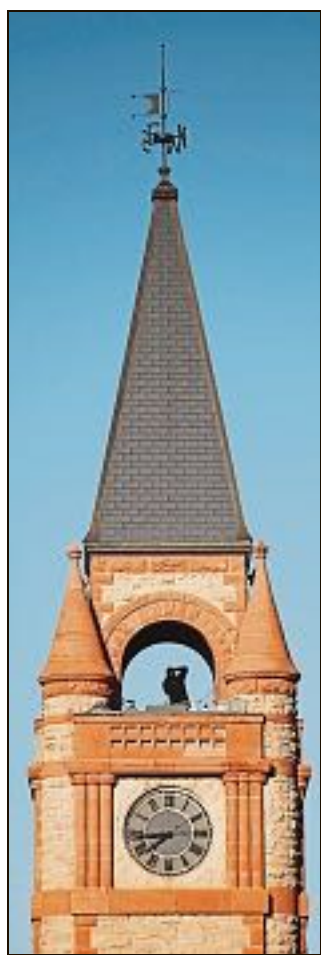
The 132-foot locomotive was one of 20 delivered by the American Locomotive Co. in Schenectady, N.Y., in 1941 — an additional five were delivered in 1944 to support the war effort and increased freight demand — and hadn't run since being retired from service in 1959. Big Boys hauled freight between Wyoming and Utah in the 1940s and '50s and were gradually replaced by diesel-electric locomotives. Of the 25 Big Boys, seven others remain on display in museums and parks across the nation.

No. 4014 — selected to become the only operational Big Boy — was carefully moved from its home in Pomona, Calif., starting in 2013 and the painstaking restoration began in 2016 at the Union Pacific's Heritage Operations Steam Shop in Cheyenne. The monumental task would take 2½ years to complete, and train enthusiasts could follow the progress and setbacks as they unfolded online. The pressure to meet the May 4 deadline was

LOCOMOTIVE, 16E



A crowd gathers in Laramie, Wyo., to witness history being made as the restored Big Boy No. 4014 locomotive makes a stop on its cross-country journey.



A photographer finds a bird's-eye view to capture the official public debut of the massive and iconic Big Boy No. 4014 at the Cheyenne Depot Museum in Wyoming.

### IF YOU GO

**What:** Historic Big Boy steam locomotive No. 4014

**Where:** Union Depot, 240 E. Kellogg Blvd.

**Admission:** Free

**Schedule:** No. 4014 arrives at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday. The locomotive will be on display from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday. Also on display will be the "Experience the Union Pacific Rail Car" multimedia, walk-through exhibit about the history of railroading. No. 4014 departs at 8:30 a.m. Friday.

**Other activities:** Food trucks will be available, model train sets, local rail vendors and family activities. Metro Transit is offering free passes for rides to Union Depot for the event. Go to [uniondepot.org/up4014](http://uniondepot.org/up4014) to download your pass.

**For more information:** [uniondepot.org](http://uniondepot.org); [up.com/heritage/steam/schedule/index.htm](http://up.com/heritage/steam/schedule/index.htm)

### Books

## Local relief group uses storytelling to help kids (and adults) heal from trauma



Roshan Khatri, medical director with Golden Valley-based Headwaters Relief Organization, displays books developed by the nonprofit to help children heal from the trauma of a disaster.

By Deanna Weniger  
[dweniger@pioneerpress.com](mailto:dweniger@pioneerpress.com)

Roshan Khatri was managing a 40-bed hospital in Nepal when the ground began to shake.

It was April 25, 2015, and he was just beginning to feel the effects of a devastating earthquake that killed nearly 9,000 people and injured over 21,000. As the hospital began to crumble, his staff scrambled for safety.

"I had to shout at them because they were not doing their jobs and duties," he said. "They were panicking. Everyone was crying. It was total chaos."

### FYI

To find out more about Headwaters or to donate, go to [headwatersrelief.org](http://headwatersrelief.org).

Weeks later, as he sat alone with a psychologist from Golden Valley-based Headwaters Relief Organization, he finally let himself cry.

Khatri understands firsthand that when the crisis is over, the healing is just beginning for the mind. For this reason, he joined Headwaters as medical director and has worked with a team to create

TRAUMA, 16E

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Big Boy No. 4014, which weighs in at 1.2 million pounds, makes its way into Rawlins, Wyo.



Thousands of people, including Benjamin Pace of Cheyenne, Wyo., who advertises the celebration of his 4th birthday with a sign on his back, lined up along the tracks and atop bridges in Cheyenne to watch as Big Boy No. 4014 successfully chugged away.

CONTINUED FROM 1E  
**> Locomotive**

enormous and the crew worked around the clock.

The goal was achieved, but with reportedly little time to spare.

"The employees in the shop are so dedicated. They did it," said railroad historian, photographer, author and former Union Pacific employee James Ehernberger, who grew up around the trains of Cheyenne and was visiting the other local Big Boy — No. 4004 — in a park the day before.

"I commend the Union Pacific for even doing this because this is a massive undertaking. It cost them a lot of money," he said.

Union Pacific has not disclosed the restoration cost of the No. 4014.

Thousands of people, including Benjamin Pace of Cheyenne, who advertised the celebration of his 4th birthday with a sign on his back, lined up along the tracks and atop bridges as the behemoth successfully chugged westward, a cloud of steam billowing above.

"He just loves trains," explained Benjamin's grandmother, noting that his grandfather retired following a 48-year career as a Union Pacific engineer.

"I've never left during the planting season. But this is a once-in-a-lifetime," said Bret Pierce, a crop and livestock farmer of 14 years who traveled from Woodward, Iowa, to

celebrate and document the occasion for his family back home. He said his plan was to follow the locomotive for two days as it traversed cross country to Ogden, Utah, where the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike was to be re-enacted on May 9. Living Legend No. 844 — a different class from the Big Boys — traveled with No. 4014 for the occasion.

Ed Dickens and crew leaned out of No. 4014's cab, waving as a sea of fans cheered and applauded. Union Pacific President and CEO Lance Fritz broke a champagne bottle to christen the engine, and after a few speeches from dignitaries, the locomotive pulled out of the station to begin a one-year cross-country excursion dubbed the Great Race Across the Midwest.

The tour includes brief stops in Albert Lea, Owatonna and Northfield on July 17, stops in St. Paul on July 17-19 and in Duluth on July 19-20 before continuing on to Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska. There are no plans to retire the No. 4014 in the near future.

My husband and I jumped in our car that day in May and spent the afternoon chasing No. 4014 through the vast Wyoming countryside, including the towns of Laramie and Rawlins. Other railroad fans lined the highways and open spaces awaiting the thrill as Big Boy passed by.

"We've been waiting and waiting and waiting for this whole thing," my husband said as the train passed by



"I commend the Union Pacific for even (restoring the locomotive) because this is a massive undertaking. It cost them a lot of money," says railroad historian, photographer, author and former Union Pacific employee James Ehernberger.



Big Boy No. 4014 is making its way across the country for a yearlong excursion dubbed the Great Race Across the Midwest.

and faded in the distance. "There she goes!"

Freelance writer and photographer Elizabeth Nida Obert worked as a

newspaper staff photographer for 18 years. She grew up in Minneapolis but lives in Rochester with her husband and cats. Contact her at elizabeth@nidaphoto.com.



Bret Pierce, left, of Woodward, Iowa, traveled to Wyoming to witness Big Boy No. 4014's launch.

CONTINUED FROM 1E  
**> Trauma**

books for children to help them talk about all the feelings and fears that surface in the aftermath of a disaster.

Headwaters has recently been recognized for its use of books to help heal traumatized kids and is working on its seventh, focusing on girls' health in Nepal.

"When everyone leaves, that's when the local people realize there's something missing between what happened to them and their lives before the disaster. That's where our books come into play," he said.

**A REQUEST FOR BOOKS**

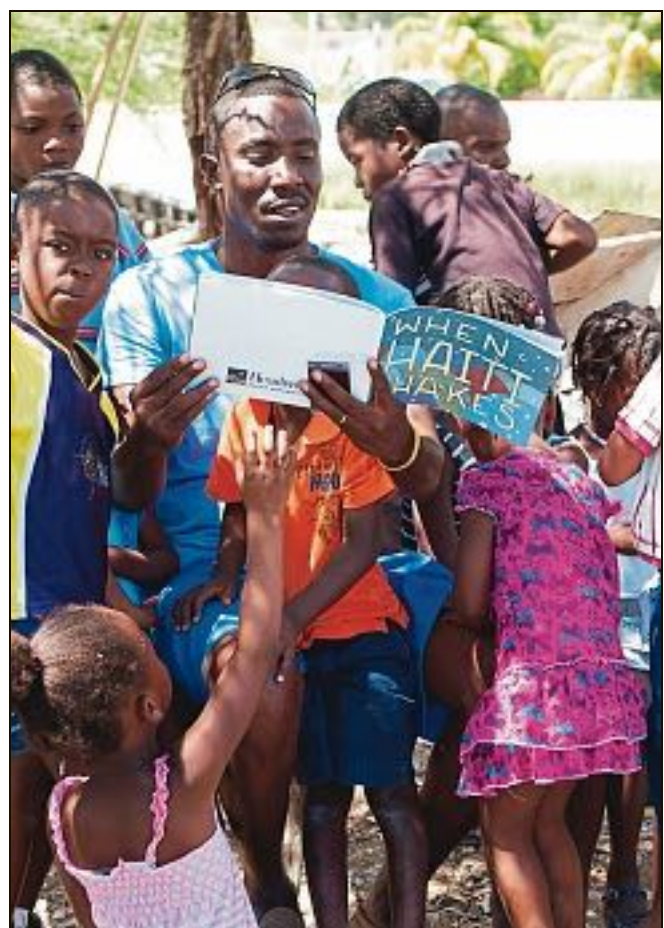
It was after a deadly earthquake in Haiti in 2010 that community leaders began requesting educational material from Headwaters to help their children recover and teach them what to do in an emergency.

A team of experts trained in child psychology and trauma response weighed in on what would become the nonprofit's first book: "When Haiti Shakes."

The team suggested using native flora and fauna in the illustrations to make the books relatable to kids.

For example, in the book, "The Savage Wind," written for Puerto Rican children who survived Hurricane Maria in 2017, the setting is an island with a parrot and several frogs showing up on each page.

The team also wanted the books to follow the before, during and after portions of a disaster to give kids a visual



COURTESY OF HEADWATERS RELIEF ORGANIZATION  
 The pastor of New Grace school in Simonette, Haiti, reads Headwaters' book "When Haiti Shakes" to local children.

timeline of what happened to them. The characters should also be children, a younger one and an older one.

"We use older brothers and sisters because we want to tell the children that they are not the only ones who feel the same," Khatri explained. "Most of the time children relate to their older brothers and sisters to try and understand things around them."

In "The Savage Wind," Maria is the younger sister with an older brother. After the hurricane, the book shifts

to talking about how the children are coping.

Maria is afraid all the time. She can't sleep. She doesn't feel like eating. Her brother wants to be alone. If the danger has passed, why don't they feel happy?

Maria talks to her teacher who helps her understand her feelings.

"The aim of the book is we're trying to make children understand it's normal to have reactions towards abnormal situations," Khatri said. "It's normal to feel fear.



DEANNA WENIGER/ PIONEER PRESS  
 Some of the books developed by the nonprofit Headwaters Relief Organization.

It's normal to feel afraid when disaster strikes."

The book, which is made of sturdy water-resistant material, is written in Spanish and English and includes a guide in the back with helpful suggestions for caregivers on how to use it.

**ADULTS NEED THE BOOKS, TOO**

As Headwaters volunteers have taken the books into post-disaster areas, they've noticed that it's not just the kids that are benefiting.

"We have seen that even the adults start crying because they can relate to the situation because they also went through the same experiences," Khatri said. "In the back of their head, it helps them realize their own trauma."

Khatri said mental healing is often delayed for relief workers because they need to be stronger longer for everyone else.

After the earth stopped shaking in Nepal, it would be months before Khatri would get a chance to manage his own trauma.

"We wore motorcycle helmets and went back into the

hospital to gather the beds and mattresses," he said. "We set up in the hospital yard and that's when the patients started coming in. We had to lay them on the ground."

They slept outside under the stars for over a month, using the few tents they had to cover the patients.

"I was not in touch with my family for two weeks. There was no electricity. All the phones were down," he said. He sent a note with his family's phone number on it with the father of a patient being airlifted for medical care. That father was able to call Khatri's family and finally let them know he was alive.

**SO DO RELIEF WORKERS**

Once the immediate patients were taken care of, wounded from villages miles away began arriving.

"The flow of patients was continuous. I didn't realize that until I started talking about it," he said. "I was emotionally and physically burned out."

It wasn't until Headwaters founder Dr. Rebecca Thomley arrived on site and talked with Khatri that he recognized how awful he felt.

"We talked about a half-hour in my office," he said. "She made me feel like it was normal to feel that way."

And then she asked him to join them in getting the books to others suffering the same symptoms.

Since then, he's helped get out a book for Greek relief workers to read to refugees called "Home is Where the Honey is," another one for typhoon survivors in the Philippines called, "When Strong Winds Blow," and a book for Ebola survivors in Sierra

Leone and Liberia called "When the Great Sickness Came."

**FOCUS ON HEALTH**

Khatri is helping put together a new book for a crisis of a different kind. It will serve to educate Nepalese girls about menstrual hygiene.

Girls who start their menstrual cycle often leave school because the schools don't have toilets or hygiene products. Eventually, after missing a week of school every month, they give up and drop out.

Khatri hopes the book will also serve to educate people that menstruation is natural, because some communities often send the girls out of the homes every month.

"They are considered impure. They are considered dirty. They aren't even allowed in the house," he said. "In some remote places, girls are forced to leave and sleep in a stable during their time. We have stories about girls dying from extreme cold or killed by wild animals."

**ARE THE BOOKS WORKING?**

Headwaters has commissioned two studies to find out whether the books are helping. But in the meantime, the organization knows the books have been well received.

"The greatest feedback is the demand for the books," Khatri said. "The Puerto Rico book is on its third printing."

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