



## **Great Plains Transportation Museum Kicks off Santa Fe Locomotive Fundraiser; *Family Ties* Actor Michael Gross Leads Effort**

***Wichita museum to cosmetically restore historic diesel locomotive No. 93 that pulled Super Chief passenger train and freight trains more than 30 years***

WICHITA, Kansas, Sept. 25, 2023, ([www.santafe93.com](http://www.santafe93.com)) – Wichita’s Great Plains Transportation Museum (GPTM) is kicking off a fundraising effort to perform a full cosmetic restoration of historic Santa Fe Railway diesel-electric locomotive No. 93. Built by the Electro-Motive Division (EMD) of General Motors Corporation at La Grange, Ill., in late 1967, 93 was donated to the museum by BNSF Railway in June 1999. The 93 pulled Santa Fe passenger trains between Chicago and California or Texas (1967-1971) and freight trains for Santa Fe and successor BNSF Railway throughout those railroad systems (1971 – 1998), rolling up millions of miles.

“Actor and Santa Fe Railway enthusiast Michael Gross, best known for playing Steven Keaton on the *Family Ties* sitcom (1982-1989), and Burt Gummer in the *Tremors* science fiction movie franchise, will be the face and voice of our efforts to restore 93 to its former glory,” stated John Deck, GPTM president. “We recently met with a representative of Mid-America Car of Kansas City, Mo., which resulted in an estimate to professionally complete a top quality cosmetic restoration. We were encouraged by the results of that meeting.”

“I am delighted to be involved with the restoration of such an iconic Santa Fe locomotive,” said Michael Gross. “My paternal grandfather, Chester Gross, worked at Santa Fe’s Fort Madison, Iowa, car and locomotive shops his entire career. Many children grew up running Lionel trains adorned with Santa Fe’s familiar red and silver livery circling Christmas trees in the 1950s and 1960s. Hence, my interest in this project to restore locomotive 93 to its proud Santa Fe heritage is very high, and personal.”

GPTM’s locomotive 93 fundraising goal is \$193,000, which will cover mechanical work required to move the locomotive round trip from Wichita to Kansas City, transportation costs, the actual restoration work and visitor access staircases for display once the locomotive returns to Wichita. Watco’s Kansas and Oklahoma

Railroad (K&O) team is donating the mechanical inspection to identify any required work to ensure the locomotive's safe transit to and from Kansas City. The locomotive will be restored in the red and silver Santa Fe *Super Fleet* scheme it has worn since 1989, when then railroad president Michael R. Haverty approved an updated version of the well-known and historic scheme used on passenger train locomotives from 1937 to 1971. Amtrak assumed passenger train operations in 1971.

"Bringing back the historic, world renowned, red and silver, passenger locomotive 'Warbonnet' paint scheme in a modernized freight version was intended to improve employee morale and boldly declare to our intermodal customers that Santa Fe was the top intermodal carrier in the United States," stated Mike Haverty, Santa Fe Railway president from mid 1989 to mid 1991.

"We designated the locomotives as the '*Super Fleet*' to acknowledge recognition of the former world-class Super Chief passenger train and assigned them to primarily handle high-speed intermodal trains on the transcontinental main line between Chicago and the West Coast," explained Haverty. "Santa Fe Railway received amazing attention when the first *Super Fleet* freight locomotive emerged from our San Bernardino shops just prior to Independence Day in 1989. The company's image also got a huge boost when the *Super Fleet* locomotives garnered worldwide coverage. Reviving the historic red and silver Warbonnet paint scheme was a game changer for our railroad."

The eye-catching red, silver, black and yellow scheme was designed in the mid-1930s by General Motors artist Leland Knickerbocker, and it was quickly adopted by Santa Fe for its new, streamlined, diesel-powered, passenger train locomotives. Santa Fe Railway's so-called "Warbonnet" scheme gained additional public popularity throughout America when Lionel applied it to O scale model trains in the early 1950s.

"Just as our prominent Santa Fe steam locomotive No. 3768 serves as a very visible historic icon of the region's rich railroad heritage proudly sitting atop the Douglas Avenue overpass in Wichita's Old Town district, 93 will be a fitting, aesthetically pleasant and historically significant ambassador for Wichita's downtown," explained Deck. "Our goal is to have the funding in hand by mid-2024, with restoration work to begin later in the year."

For those interested in supporting the Santa Fe 93 restoration effort, please click on the following link: [www.santafe93.com](http://www.santafe93.com); or drop by the GPTM museum at 700 East Douglas Avenue (open Saturdays and Sundays), Wichita, 67202 / 316-263-0944. GPTM is a 501(c)3, not-for-profit educational and preservation organization.

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## **About Great Plains Transportation Museum**

Established in 1983, Great Plains Transportation Museum in Wichita, Kan., is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to education about, and preservation of, the region's rich railroad heritage that dates back to the 1870s. Volunteers staff the museum, which is located in the city's Old Town district at 700 East Douglas Avenue. Locomotive and rolling stock displays are at the Union Station platform level, adjacent to mainline tracks that carry BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad and South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad freight trains. In 2022, a Virtual Railfan camera providing a live 24/7 video feed was installed at the museum for the benefit of those interested in viewing passing trains. More information is available at: [www.gptm.us](http://www.gptm.us) or by calling 316-263-0944.