

March 2019

# Horizons

A Golden West Customer Newsletter

## Getting Off Track

Nostalgia Fuels  
Hartford Train Business

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 **Golden West**  
We're everywhere people connect.



# Getting Off Track

## Nostalgia Fuels Hartford Train Business

Fans at the Texas Motor Speedway and at a Virginia minor league baseball stadium can ride a passenger trackless train manufactured in rural South Dakota by Dave Roehrich.

"My wife and I delivered the train to the Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, and we got a tour," Roehrich says. "I don't often get to see where my trains end up, so that was pretty neat."

Over the past 13 years, Roehrich has built and sold more than 150 trackless trains for both children and adult riders. The trains operate all across the United States for charities, children's hospitals, churches, city governments, vineyards and more. As of last fall, he runs Roundhouse Trackless Train Company from his home and shop off Highway 38 west of Hartford.

"Some people run them as businesses, and I'm surprised how many I sell to individuals," Roehrich says. "There's a lot more interest in it than I would have guessed."



Roundhouse Company Trackless Trains are manufactured in Hartford. They are shipped all across the United States for use by charities, children's hospitals, churches, city governments, vineyards and more.

### Dad Sparks Train Interest

Roehrich says his dad, Edward, sparked his interest in building authentic-looking, smaller-scale trains for rides.

"My dad was a railroad buff," he says. "He built a train about this size that ran on tracks."

That was in the late 1980s. Roehrich built his first train in 2006 as something fun to do with his 12-year-old son, Brian. Their first train also ran on tracks, but the next winter the pair built a second train that ran on wheels. The trackless train proved popular at several area events that summer, and it was much easier to set up.

In 2007, Roehrich sold his trackless train on eBay in just one day, and he received additional inquiries from the listing that turned into orders. He began to realize the demand for trains and launched a simple website promoting his hobby.

"There's an appeal to trains and train rides," Roehrich explains. "Our country was built by the railroad. There's a nostalgia to it that makes train rides cool, even in today's modern world."

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### Trains Replace Heating & Cooling

When he started building trains, Roehrich owned and operated Sioux Falls Heating & Air Conditioning. But the housing market decline in 2008 impacted the heating and cooling industry. By 2009, he was earning more income from trains than from his business.

"Initially, I thought of train manufacturing as a hobby," Roehrich admits. "But it came at a good time for me and was a good transition."

Demand for the trains has been strong enough for his son, Brian, to also work full time for Roundhouse Trackless Trains for the last few years. Brian serves in the Army National Guard 147th Bravo Battery Unit of Yankton and is currently serving a nine-month deployment in Germany.



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The Roundhouse Trackless Train Company manufactures gas and electric models. The trains range from four- to six-cars long including a locomotive, coal tender and passenger cars. The caboose can be standard or wheelchair accessible. The company offers many custom options, such as art/graphics, realistic smoke from the stack, public address and speaker systems and LED lighting. Standard packages can be ordered from the website, as well.

“This business is 100 percent Internet based,” Roehrlich explains. “To try to advertise in publications across the country would be cost prohibitive.”

Like his trains, Roehrlich’s website and online presence have also evolved and improved over the years. He estimates

that about 90 percent of his website visits, and therefore his customers, come from an Internet search.

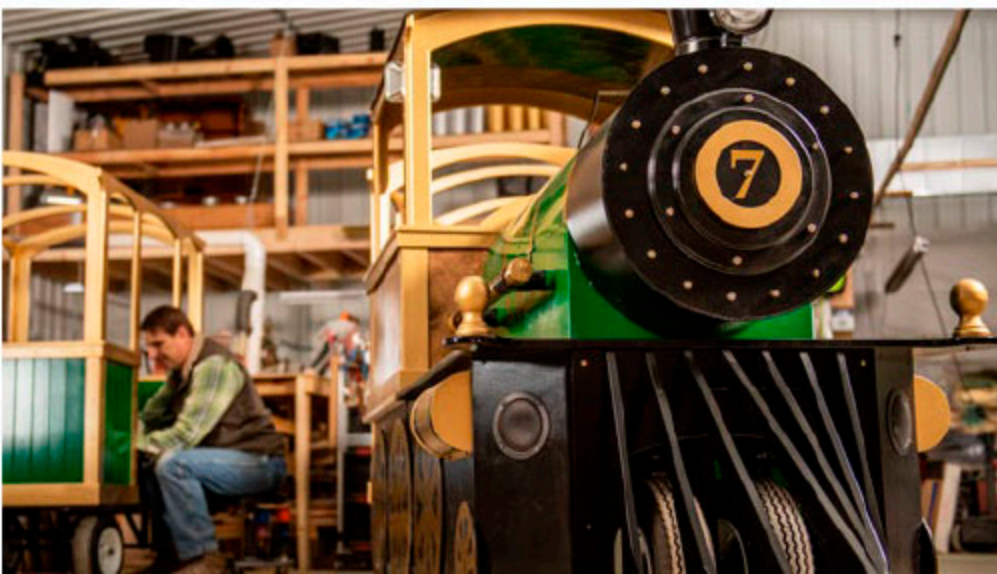
### Many Shipped to Warmer Climates

Roehrlich has shipped a lot of trains to the warmer climate areas of Texas, Florida and the south and southeastern parts of the country. They are especially popular for Christmas events.

“I am working on a sleigh prototype to sell,” he says. “We were hired to bring Santa to the Mall of America one year. They had used real reindeer, but they weren’t sure-footed in the mall. Unfortunately, I don’t generally have an extra train around to use for those types of things every year.”

Roehrlich believes his dad would enjoy seeing how his train interest has grown and now supports his son and grandson.

“I think he would be surprised that I’m making a living at it. You never know how things will end up.”



For more information about the Roundhouse Company Trackless Trains, visit [roundhousecompany.com](http://roundhousecompany.com).

The company manufactures gas and electric models and offers many customization options.

# We're Everywhere People Connect

Over the past few weeks you may have noticed our new TV spots and radio and newspaper ads. The updated campaign is about more than just our look.

This is about our story, and your stories, too. The stories of how we connect. Where we connect. And maybe most important of all, why we connect.

Your cooperative was started and is sustained by you, the members of the Golden West Cooperative. We continue to serve your needs, so that you can live and work in rural South Dakota without sacrificing strong connectivity.

We look forward to continuing to share our story and the story of our employees with you. However, we are especially excited to hear and share even more of your stories with others in our rural communities.

## Connect With Us Online

We share stories in many ways including on our website, in this newsletter and via email. We also use social media, and we encourage you to follow us:

 [Facebook.com/goldenwesttelecom](https://www.facebook.com/goldenwesttelecom)

 [Youtube.com/goldenwestcoop](https://www.youtube.com/goldenwestcoop)

 [Instagram.com/goldenwesttele](https://www.instagram.com/goldenwesttele)

Our television spots feature drone footage from across our service territory (see screen shot below), and our print ads feature striking landscape photography (right). See more at [goldenwest.com/connect](https://goldenwest.com/connect).

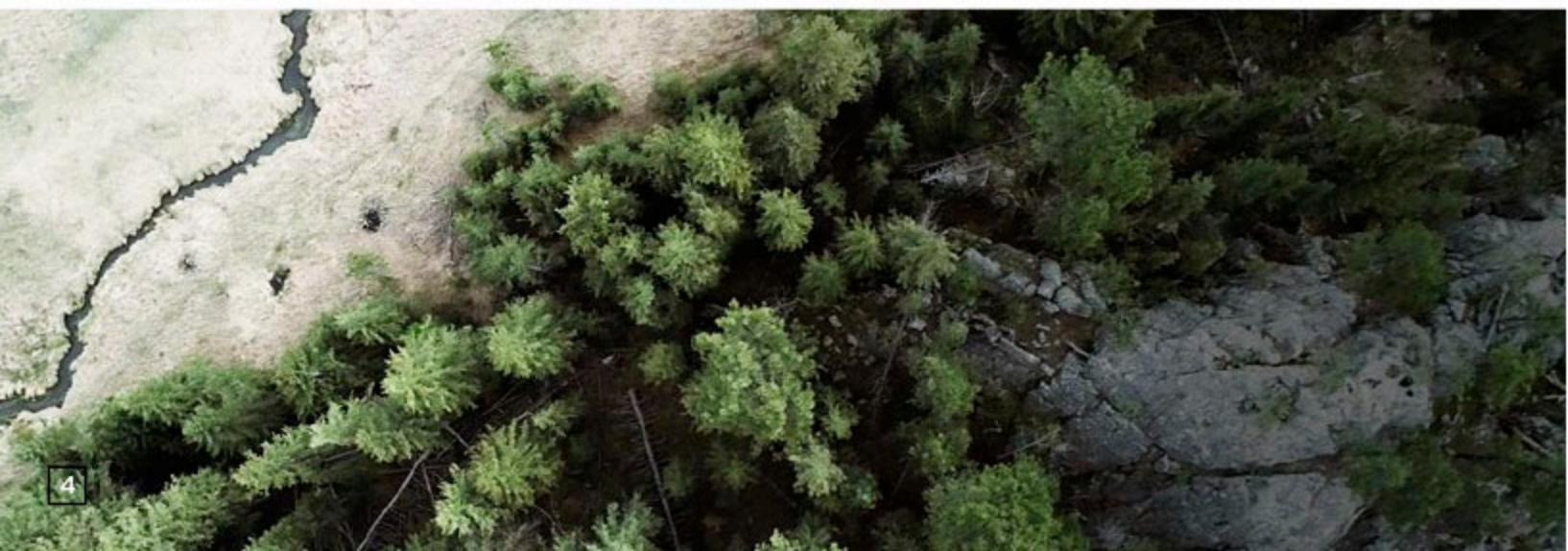
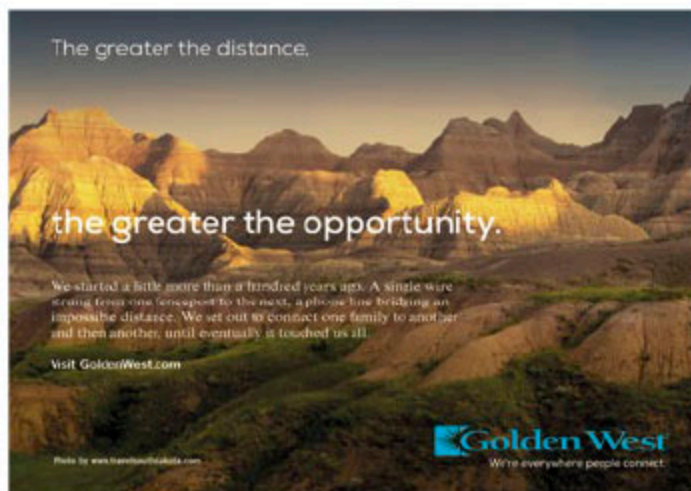
We periodically run giveaway contests on our social media channels, so there may be something in it for you to check us out! We post timely information and product and service

updates on Facebook. You can view our new television spots and other helpful videos on YouTube.

We are working to reinvigorate our Instagram feed using the hash tag [#EverywherePeopleConnect](https://www.instagram.com/EverywherePeopleConnect). This brings us back to our need for story ideas.

## Submit Your Story Ideas

What great things are happening in your town? Is the city, county, school or a service club doing something interesting? Is there a new and exciting business to support? Is an existing business doing big things? Is there an individual – youth or adult – worthy of a shout out for their efforts and accomplishments? Golden West would love to learn more about the great things happening in the communities we serve.





# Pay It Forward Helps Kids!

The Pay it Forward campaign is now in its fourth year! Each year, our customers have the chance to give back to local elementary schools when they upgrade or subscribe to a new service in the month of March. Golden West will “pay it forward” by donating \$50 to that customer’s local elementary school.

Golden West contributed about \$40,000 to elementary schools in our service territory over the first three years of our Pay It Forward campaign. With help from our customers, we can exceed the \$50,000 mark during this year’s campaign! At the end of the campaign, we send all the donations to area schools to decide how the funds can best serve their needs.

We were happy to hear back from a number of elementary schools about how they put their money to good use last year, including:

- **Freeman Academy** used their funds to help pay for a trip to Washington D.C. “This campaign is a great way to show our students how others in the community are doing things like this to make a positive impact,” says Nathan Epp, Freeman Academy’s Head of School.
- **Hot Springs Elementary**, in conjunction with the community of Hot Springs, purchased new playground equipment. “Donors like yours help make our school and community a great place to live,” adds John Fitzgerald, Hot Springs Elementary School Principal.



Freeman Academy teacher Karla Rupp works with two students learning about Mr. Edison, a robot that can be programmed to do a task on its own using code.

- **In Martin**, “We used our donation to buy incentives for our Cool Cash program. Students receive Cool Cash for good behavior, attendance and following school-wide expectations. They were very excited to see all the cool stuff they could buy with their Cool Cash,” says Amie Kuxhaus, Martin Grade School Principal.

The response from the first three years of Pay It Forward was remarkable, and Golden West looks forward to helping local elementary schools again this year. The Fourth Annual Pay It Forward campaign runs through March 31.

To learn more, visit [goldenwest.com/payitforward](https://goldenwest.com/payitforward) or call 1-855-888-7777.



# It's Always Time to *Celebrate*

We're all familiar with the big holidays like Christmas, Halloween and Easter. But did you know there are hundreds of other unique holidays out there to celebrate?

National Ag Day was Thursday, March 14, and you've probably heard of Administrative Professionals Days which is April 24. Let's take a look at some other similar upcoming holidays and what you can do to celebrate. If anything, it'll help us take our minds off this brutally cold winter!

## MARCH 29

### National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day

While we encourage shopping local all year, take this day to support the privately owned small businesses in your town. From boutiques and diners to outfitters and auto shops, locally owned businesses are the lifeblood of our communities!

**Where to Start:** Visit your local Chamber of Commerce.

## MARCH 31

### World Backup Day

Like their website says, "Don't be an April fool. Be prepared and back up your files on March 31." Whether it's to an external hard drive or the cloud, save your digital files at least once a year.

**Where to Start:** [WorldBackUpDay.com](http://WorldBackUpDay.com).

## APRIL 7

### National Beer Day (Responsible adults, ages 21 and over)

Grab a pint and toast to your favorite brew. President Roosevelt signed the Cullen-Harrison Act, repealing Prohibition, on March 22, 1933. However, it wasn't until April 7 of that year that people could buy, sell and consume beer.

**Where to Start:**

Support local brewers and Golden West customers.  
Buffalo Ridge Brewing, Hartford | Mt Rushmore Brewing, Custer | Highway 79 Brewery, Hot Springs.

## APRIL 11

### National Pet Day

Pets bring so much joy to our lives, why not take at least one day out of the year to celebrate them?

**Where to Start:** Take your pet to the park or watch Animal Planet (Golden West Ch. 50).



## APRIL 12

### Grilled Cheese Day

Toasty, gooey, buttery, delicious and with a cup of tomato soup for dunking. Now that's something to celebrate!

**Where to Start:** Food Network (Golden West Ch. 40).



Cooking Channel (Golden West Ch. 117).



## APRIL 18

### National High Five Day

Maybe your co-worker just nailed a sales call, or you're still celebrating that delicious grilled cheese from April 12. Either way, a high five is in order.

**Where to Start:** Raise hand, find cool person, high five cool person.

## MAY 4

### National Star Wars Day

May the fourth be with you ... get it? Anyone can celebrate all things Star Wars for one day.

**Where to Start:** Star Wars Resistance on Disney XD (Golden West Ch. 103).

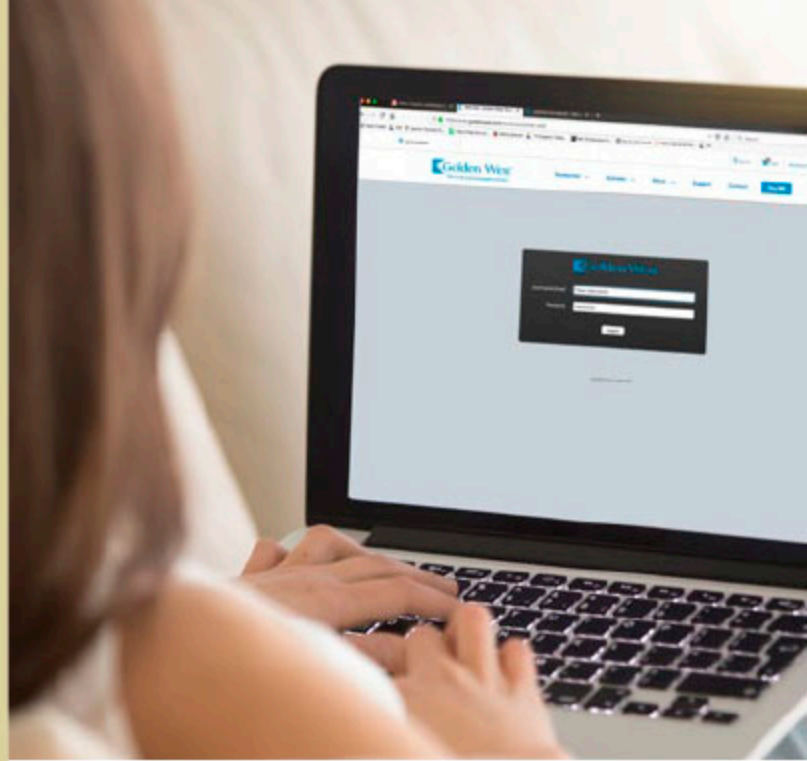


# Best Password PRACTICES

It feels like every website wants you to register as a user these days. Establishing an account allows you to save and track your orders or gives you access to sites. But this also means you'll need a password, and then another password and another.

It's tempting to use the same password for multiple sites, but for security purposes, this isn't recommended. While what you use for a password is entirely up to you, here are six tips to keep in mind before your next login.

- 1. Go Long** – Most experts suggest eight to 10 characters for optimum password safety. However, the more characters you use, the harder a password is to crack. The one downside to longer passwords is difficulty remembering them, although sometimes a saying or sentence will work.
- 2. Get Weird** – Avoid birthdays, children's names and home addresses. Create passwords featuring unconventional spellings, random symbols and numbers.
- 3. Spread Out** – Many password fields require you to use numbers and symbols when creating an account. Do not just start or end your password with the required characters, sprinkle them throughout.
- 4. Mix it Up** – Using the same login for multiple sites makes it easier for a hacker to access all your information. Create unique passwords for all your accounts to avoid this trap, and consider using a password manager to help you remember.
- 5. Managed Help** – Password manager applications specialize in keeping all your passwords in one safe location, so you'll only need to remember one password instead of dozens. A quick Internet search will provide you with many options.
- 6. Go for Two** – Two-factor authentication is widely used by banks, social networks, Google, etc. This system requires a PIN number sent to you via email or text every time you login. It may at first seem inconvenient, but it offers an added added level of protection.



## Email Policy Strengthens Password SECURITY

In our continued efforts to improve email security, Golden West is now marking compromised email account passwords as "tainted." Once an email password is marked as tainted, the owner of the account will never be able to use that same password again.

When creating your email password, it may be helpful to review the Golden West password policy. These parameters were created to help ensure optimum security for your email account.

### Golden West Password Policy

- Password must be at least eight characters long and no longer than 128 characters.
- Password must not contain the username (forward or backward).
- Password must not contain the word password.
- Password must contain letters and numbers (at least one of each).
- All letters, numbers and symbols are allowed as well as spaces.

STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
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RAPID CITY SD

**Golden West**  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
PO Box 411, Wall, SD 57790

# Enhanced WI-FI

Is the layout or construction of your home impacting your Wi-Fi signal?

Enhanced Wi-Fi uses a signal extender in conjunction with your modem to provide stronger wireless connections throughout your home.



For just **\$7.95 a month** you can enjoy a reliable Wi-Fi signal in every room of your home, on all your connected devices.

Signal Extender

### Additional Features:

- Second Network for Guests
- Control Network Name & Passwords
- View Wireless Devices on Network
- No Contracts or Installation Fees

Contact us for more information! **1-855-888-7777** • [goldenwest.com/WI-FI](http://goldenwest.com/WI-FI)

