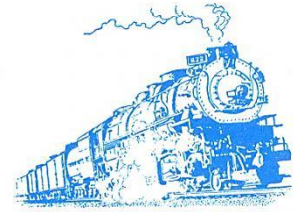


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



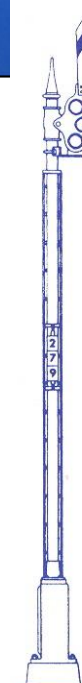
SUMMER 2016 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 36 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBERS 6 & 7



The Delaware & Hudson was a Classy Railroad!

The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
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<u>Wall Street Journal</u> Reporter.....	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
Empire State News.....	Dick Kozlowski
Amtrak News.....	Rick Sutton, Russell Buck
“The Chief’s Corner”.....	Fred Lockhart

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The Semaphore is the monthly (except July) newsletter of the South Shore Model Railway Club & Museum (SSMRC) and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The SSMRC, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please address all correspondence regarding this publication to: *The Semaphore*, 11 Hancock Rd., Hingham, MA 02043. ©2015
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VOLUME 36 ■■■■■ NUMBERS 6 & 7 ■■■■■ JUNE-JULY 2016

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('18)
	Bryan Miller ('18)
	Roger St. Peter ('17)
	Rick Sutton (Temp)

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On the cover: 1993 was the D&H’s Sesquicentennial year, and they celebrated it with a classy 2-day excursion from Colonie, NY to Montreal and return. A Reading T-1 was turned into a D&H K-62 Northern, complete with recessed headlight. The trip was double-headed at times with a CP Pacific from Steamtown. In Montreal the even classier Alco PAs were on display. They could smoke just like their older brethren steam locomotives! (Pics by D.Clinton)

FORM 19 ORDERS

JUNE B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, June 27th 8 p.m.

DECODER & LOCO TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, July 7th 8 p.m.

JULY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, 11th 8 p.m.

JULY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, July 25th 8 p.m.

ANNUAL COOKOUT & POOL PARTY

Tuesday, July 26th @ Jim South's

SUMMER OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, August 6th 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

AUGUST BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, August 8th 8 p.m.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, August 27th

AUGUST B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, August 29th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Fred Lockhart** on winning this month's 50/50 Raffle!

FOR AUGUST: Savery Moore has prepared a "matching" contest: "Match the Streamliners to Their Railroads. You will find this puzzle at the end of the newsletter and there are extra copies on top of the old wooden display case in the Train Room. Don't forget your name and good luck!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

As most of you know, I have been away from the Club a lot since the last Newsletter was done, so this column will be a little short on updates. I can report that the Electrical Committee has installed



and tested the necessary wiring from the switch machines in the Cedar Hill passenger Terminal to the interface panel below the railroad that will provide power to the new model board for the passenger terminal. The benchwork Committee has made the frames for the panels and have them sitting in place.

I have not forgotten about getting qualifications started. I am hoping to get that going next month. What I have done in the past, was to appoint several members who were proficient in areas of the railroad to work as qualifiers with me.

There are still quite a few items on the "punch list" that we have been working on, I will update it and try to schedule a time for a brief meeting to review it with all of you.

I apologize for the shortness of this column, but by the time the summer break is over I'm sure I will have a lot more to report on.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

ELECTION RESULTS

45 members voted at the Annual Meeting held this month:

President.....JACK FOLEY
Vice President.....DAN PETERSON
TreasurerWILL BAKER
Secretary.....DAVE CLINTON
Chief EngineerFRED LOCKHART
Directors (2 years).....BILL GARVEY
.....BRYAN MILLER

Thanks to all who were willing to serve their Club and good luck to the new Board members in the year ahead.

Also approved at the meeting was a dues increase of \$2/month. This is the first increase in seven years! The cost of locker rental remains the same.

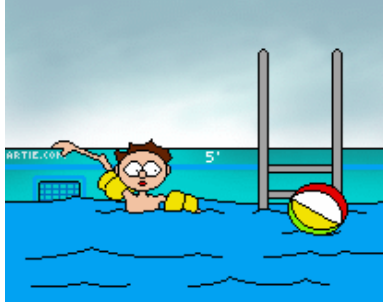
With Mike Dolan's resignation leaving an opening in the Director's position, Jack appointed Rick Sutton to fill in until a Special Election can be held; this to be at the August Business Meeting. If you are interested in running for this position, which will

come up for election next June, please contact Jim South, Coley Walsh or Chris Barlow.



ANNUAL COOKOUT

AND



POOL PARTY AT JIM'S

Jim and Alice South have graciously invited us to their home again to enjoy our Annual Cookout & Pool Party on **TUESDAY, JULY 26th**.

Arrive any time after 1 p.m. and bring your bathing suit to enjoy their beautiful in-ground pool. It's usually a hot, summer day, and the pool provides a welcome relief! There are tables with umbrellas to get out of the sun. Some members bring whored-oovres, to munch on during the afternoon and about 5 we start with the burgers, dogs and whatever else is brought. When it gets dark enough, we show pictures, movies, slides on the big screen, while sitting around the pool. All members and applicants are welcome! Sign-up sheet is on the Bulletin Board.



SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

SUMMER 2011 (5 years ago)

- ✱Northeast Chapter of PRR Society holds meeting at SSMRC for first time.
- ✱Wiring on 3rd leg progressing, not connected to railroad yet.
- ✱Amtrak work 50% complete on replacing Niantic River Bridge in CT.
- ✱Railroad hiring marks new high, since economic recovery began.
- ✱CSX begins work on \$100-million expansion of Worcester Yard.
- ✱Saratoga & North Creek RR plans to begin operations on July 1st.
- ✱Irving Transportation Services starts new railroad, Maine Northern Railway, from Madawaska to Millinocket. Formerly Montreal, Maine & Atlantic trackage.
- ✱Cumbres & Toltec begins operation over restored Lobato Trestle, which had been damaged by fire the previous year, causing "bustitution" around the area and a 28% drop in ridership.
- ✱MBTA institutes "quiet car" on all commuter rail lines.
- ✱Weekend service on three Old Colony lines suspended until December, due to tie replacement on "Main Line" from Braintree to Boston.
- ✱Our first 1-day "Summer Open House" planned for last Saturday in July.
- ✱Delli Priscoli changes plan of selling Edaville property for home subdivision to reopening park for a September-December season. (Since there were no buyers for his asking \$10-million price.)

SUMMER 2006 (10 years ago)

- ✱Doug Buchanan retires as Treasurer, after 30+ yr
- ✱Conway Scenic adds ex-QBT U-23b #21 to roster
- ✱BNSF invites railfans to join "Citizens United for Rail Security" program; first in the Nation to do this.
- ✱Plans to build 40-story office building and 13-story hotel above South Station proposed.
- ✱1205th Transportation Railway Battalion of U.S. Army Reserves at Middletown, CT deactivated.
- ✱Iowa Interstate RR takes delivery of two Chinese OJ 2-10-2 locomotives. Built in 1980s, to be used for railfan trips.

●UP unveils first “Heritage”-series paint schemes on locomotives commemorating railroads they absorbed: D&RGW on SD70MAC. C&NW and SP to follow.

●\$6 billion project to complete two new RR tunnels under Hudson River expected to be completed in 2015. (Not!-Ed.)

●CT purchases 11 new locomotives built by Brookville Equipment Corp. of Brookville, PA, to replace 50+ year-old F10s and FL9s, service Waterbury and Danbury Lines.

●MBTA takes delivery of last batch of new tokens, soon to be replaced by “Charlie Card”.

SUMMER 2001 (15 years ago)

●Boston-Portland service scheduled to begin in fall

●VIA Rail Canada introduces “Silver & Blue” service amenities.

●Connecticut D.O.T. begins \$300-million project to replace 1907-era catenary on ex-New Haven main.

●Abandoned St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County RR in Vermont to be converted into series of recreational trails.

●Amtrak finally moves into Worcester’s rebuilt Union Station.

●State spends 8-million to complete design phase for new railroad stations in Fall River & New Bedford.

●Facing serious cash-flow problems, Amtrak receives permission to mortgage Penn Station in NYC.

●Greenbush Commuter Rail restoration “Final Environmental Impact Report” filed with Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

SUMMER 1996 (20 Years Ago)

●Amtrak’s *AutoTrain* goes “Superliner”

●Amtrak places order for 98 “Genesis” P42 locos.

●Group called “Edaville Entertainment” plans to reopen as theme park in July.

●Alan Nickerson establishes our “Home Page” on the Internet.

●BNSF picks new paint scheme, similar to old Great Northern’s green and orange; calls it “Heritage”.

SUMMER 1991 (25 Years Ago)

●Long-time member Bob Persson passes away suddenly at the age of 53.

●Amtrak inaugurates “Empire Connection”, moving all trains previously using Grand Central Terminal to Penn Station in NYC.

●French and English workers make final breakthrough in English Channel “Chunnel”.

●MBTA unveils plans for new RTE 128 station.

●Amtrak completes study of restoration of train service to Portland, ME, from North Station.

●Slumping profits make future of Providence & Worcester RR uncertain.

●MA State Transportation Secretary, Richard Taylor, pledges that all three lines of Old Colony RR will be built.

SUMMER 1986 (30 Years Ago)

●Editor rides inaugural Amtrak Cape Codder to Hyannis, restoring service which had ended over 20 years prior. New Amtrak slogan initiated: “Amtrak Puts the Beach Within Reach”.

●Ron Clough begins multi-part travelogue “All Aboard Expo 86”, a 27-day, 10,000-mile trip to British Columbia and Alaska.

●I.C.C. blocks merger of ATSF and SP.

●Amtrak single-tracks Springfield-New Haven line.

●Amtrak places first “Material Handling Cars” (MHC) in service.

●New Hampshire Northcoast RR purchases section of Conway Branch between Rochester and Ossipee, NH, from Guilford.

●Amtrak’s First-Class tickets now include meals.

●New Providence, RI RR station dedicated.

●Wolfeboro RR (NH) equipment sold and removed from property.

●Strike against Guilford causes havoc with northern New England rail service.

●NMRA Convention held in Boston, with equipment display in Braintree Yard and SSMRC getting Bus load of conventioners.

●Cape Cod & Hyannis RR gets go-ahead with 3 daily round-trips between Braintree Red Line station and Hyannis.

SUMMER 1981 (35 Years Ago)

●Conrail deficit \$4.8 billion. FRA Administrator wants to put it up for sale but executive L. Stanley Crane asks for more time. (CR became very profitable and was sold 17 years later to NS & CSX).

●Operations Chairman John Governor introduces “Hand Signals” to our Operations.

●“Portable Railroad” (original) taken in Chet Price’s station wagon to North Conway Model RR Club’s show for the last time.

●Cape Cod & Hyannis RR begins operations between Hyannis and Sandwich with tourist trains.

●New “card-key” security system installed on door from entry room to North Division layout room.

DECODER & ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

Joe Dumas brought his brass B&A 4-6-6T commuter loco in to test run and re-program.

Stan Rydell brought his PRR SD9 by P2K for a lighting up-grade. He replaced the factory bulbs with L.E.D.s.

Chris Barlow had two P2K locos, also: a NYC PA-1 and PB-1. These took the DH126P and simply plugged into the 8-pin plug. Something happened in the B-unit, though, and next thing he saw was smoke coming from the shell—and it wasn't "Alco smoke"—it was white! The only thing that we could figure was that some component on the decoder came into contact with another component on the factory board and shorted it out. A replacement DH126P worked fine.

Paul Agnew returned with his EMD "demo" SD70M from Athearn Genesis. This dates from the early days, when these were only offered in kits. Many hours of assembly required...especially assembling the delicate ditch lights. On this visit, Paul replaced the decoder from a DH150 to DH165AO. He also replaced four of the bulbs with new ones, as the original Athearn bulbs suck...genuine Chinese knock-off on the 1.5v "mini-bulbs" from Miniaturics

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for running the clinic this month, as I was attending a Director's meeting.

Our next clinic will be **Thursday, July 7th**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. Everyone is welcome!



THE TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS celebrated its rich history, as the largest conservation and preservation organization in Massachusetts, and

the oldest, regional land trust in the world with a 125th-year celebration, using three private railroad cars from the 1940s. They departed North Station on May 21st for Appleton Farms in Ipswich, where celebrations took place. ("World's End" in Hingham is one of their properties.) BG.

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"THOMAS LAND" at Edaville opens its second season with a new monorail attraction, called "Winston's Skyline Express". (BG)

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THE GENERAL MANAGER of the MBTA says he will retire after his current appointment expires on June 30. Frank DePaola, has served as the Massachusetts transit agency's top leader since February 2015. DePaola says he's retiring, in part, to focus on his health after fighting cancer recently. Since assuming the leadership role of the agency in 2015, DePaola has shared responsibility with Chief Administrator Brian Shortsleeve in overseeing the agency's departments. Some of his accomplishments include the design and implementation of an \$83 million winter resiliency program and ensuring the renovation of Government Center Station was completed on time and within budget. Shortsleeve will step into the role of Acting General Manager effective July 1, with MBTA Chief Operating Officer Jeffrey Gonneville also taking on more roles. (TN)

●●●●●●
A YEAR AFTER the Simpson Railroad in western Washington shut down, historians and local officials are making a push to preserve America's last logging road as an operating museum. If they are successful in acquiring the railroad, buildings and equipment, they could attempt to open a diesel-era version of the Nevada Northern or East Broad Top. The Simpson Lumber Co. sold its mill in Shelton, Wash., to Sierra Pacific Industries in early 2015. The mill and railroad were closed last spring. The Simpson once had a rail system that stretched hundreds of miles into the woods of western Washington, but in recent years it operated just 10 miles of track from Shelton to Mill 5. The railroad rostered a handful of EMD switchers, including SW9 No. 900, which dates to the transition from steam to diesel in the 1950s. (TN)

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OFFICIALS WITH MOTIVEPOWER Inc. of Idaho, say they'll lay off 210 people at the company's locomotive manufacturing plant in Boise.

The Wabtec Co. subsidiary informed the Idaho Department of Labor that the employees would be out of work in late-July, KIVI-TV reports. MotivePower Vice President John Howard tells the television station that a decline in the freight industry resulted in fewer orders for locomotives. The layoff will cut the company's workforce in half, officials say. "A number of our customers in the freight industry have curtailed their capital spending for 2017," Howards says. "So unfortunately we are having to react as well." MotivePower has manufactured and remanufactured more than 2,500 locomotives at its 300,000-square-foot facility since the 1970s. These include the popular "MPXpress" series of diesel-electric passenger locomotives that commuter agencies from around the country have bought. (TN)

●●●●●●

THE THOROUGHbred of Transportation is content competing on its own tracks, thank you. Norfolk Southern recently become the second Class I railroad to announce it's not interested in working with a group that proposes a 278-mile route around Chicago that supporters say would alleviate freight congestion in the region. On May 23, NS officials wrote a letter to the Surface Transportation Board saying they would not join Great Lakes Basin Transportation's effort to build a Chicago bypass and instead would focus on its own system, the Chicago Tribune reports. The STB is currently taking comments on the project for an environmental impact statement. "Norfolk Southern has a robust route network, with multiple routes into and out of the Chicago area and also owns its own bypass route that runs directly to Kansas City," a railroad attorney wrote. "For this reason, we are not inclined to think that the proposed Great Lakes Basin route would work well with our system or that we would be a user of the route." The Great Lakes Basin's route would start in Wisconsin and loop around Chicago to the southwest, ending near La Porte, Ind. The railroad is expected to cost \$8 billion. Union Pacific officials said previously that they were uninterested in working with Great Lakes Basin and would rather focus on existing projects to decongest the Chicago area. (TN)

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THE MBTA has begun running non-stop commuter service between Worcester, Mass., and Boston, which are about 40 miles apart. The new service began on May 23 and gets commuters from the

state's second largest city to its capital in less than an hour. "The new express train will give commuters more options on an improved schedule that reflect the needs of today for both our residents and our economy," says Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito. Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack says that the non-stop train is part of a wider, comprehensive update of commuter schedules. "These are the most substantive changes in decades, and will lead to improved service and customer dependability," Pollack says. The train leaves Union Station in Worcester at 8:05 a.m. and stops at Back Bay, Yawkey Way, and South Station in Boston. The return trip departs South Station at 7:35 p.m. (TN)

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FOR THE FOURTH YEAR in a row, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority is offering weekend passenger service between South Station and Cape Cod. The *Cape Flyer* began its 2016 season over Memorial Day Weekend. The train makes three round trips every weekend through Columbus Day. The train makes stops in Braintree, Brockton, Middleborough, Wareham Village, Buzzards Bay and Hyannis, in Massachusetts. During its first year of operation in 2012, more than 16,000 people rode the train. Last year, ridership was more than 13,000, according to the Boston Globe. The train is run as a partnership between MBTA and the Cape Cod Regional Transit Administration. One-way trips cost \$22 and round trips cost \$40. (TN)

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THE STRASBURG Rail Road shop is well-known nationwide for the quality of its work. In fact, it's so well-known that it needs more space to accommodate the growing business. The railroad says it will make a \$1.75 million addition to its shop, building in more than 12,000 square feet to its current 18,000 square foot shop. Railroad officials say they also plan to add six more full-time positions. Company officials expect to increase outside contract work by 25 percent when the addition is complete. Groundbreaking is planned for September with completion by early 2017. Linn Moedinger, Strasburg's president and chief mechanical officer, tells Trains News Wire that demand for outside contract work has been very strong, to the point that they've had to turn down work due to space and time constraints. (TN)

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AMTRAK AND SIEMENS Rail Manufacturing are celebrating the construction of the 70th ACS-64 #669 electric locomotive that will soon be put into service along the Northeast Corridor. “The manufacturing milestone marks the culmination of a years’ long partnership as the final high-efficiency locomotive — built by Siemens in Sacramento with components from more than 60 U.S. suppliers — heads to the Northeast Corridor for commissioning and revenue service,” officials say. Siemens began construction of the new ACS-64s, also known as Amtrak Cities Sprinters, back in 2012. The first one entered service in 2014. Since then, Amtrak has used the locomotives on the Northeast and Keystone corridors, replacing Amtrak’s fleet of AEM-7 and HHP-8 locomotives. (TN)

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SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS began public celebrations this month to mark the completion of a massive engineering and construction project that was decades in the making: the Gotthard Base Tunnel. The tunnel opens to regular passenger service on June 1. Any visitor to Switzerland who has ridden the line through the 1882 Gotthard rail tunnel will recall the numerous curves, loops and bridges on the approaches to the tunnel from both north and south. But the 2.6 percent grades and tight curvature on the approaches to the old tunnel have limited train size and speed. For years, Swiss transportation planners have wanted to iron out these capacity constraints. The 21.5-mile Lötschberg Base Tunnel opened in 2007. But the Gotthard tunnel was the centerpiece of the project to improve rail capacity. Total cost of the Gotthard route projects would be approximately \$13 billion. This included both the replacement of the existing 9.3-mile Gotthard tunnel with a new, 35.4-mile base tunnel, and a second, 9.6-mile bore (the Ceneri Base Tunnel) between Bellinzona and Lugano. (TN)

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THE MBTA IS HOPING to use a voluntary retirement program and other incentives to reduce its staffing level by 300 workers—a move aimed at saving the public transit agency about \$25 million. Officials say that the savings will be used to help close an estimated \$80 million budget deficit. (PL)

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A GREAT DESTINATION for a summer trip would be North Adams, MA. The Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum has started operating their

historic Budd RDC-1 from North Adams to Adams. The trip runs on weekends at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. for the 8-mile round trip. There’s a great Heritage Museum next to the tracks in North Adams, depicting the building of the Hoosac Tunnel and includes a 15-minute movie, along with artifacts and real interesting pictures and descriptions of the building of what was then the longest tunnel in the country. Since you’re in the Berkshires, take a ride down the road to Lenox and visit the historic station (1903), where you can browse the historical and technical exhibits, gift shop and O-scale model train display. You can also take the “Yard Jitney” for a tour of the railroad equipment parked in the yard. A great place to enjoy a meal. Ready for lunch or supper, after all this railroading? Continue down Rte 7 a few miles to Lee and eat at “Sullivan Station Restaurant”, the old depot converted into a charming, railroad-themed eatery featuring hearty American cooking (my type of food!-Ed.). The Hoosatonic RR runs right outside!

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VERMONT GOV. PETER SHUMLIN has signed the state’s fiscal year 2017 Transportation Bill. The legislation includes \$33.4 million for rail, a five-percent, \$1.7 million increase over fiscal year 2016. The budget includes \$4.1 million for track and bridge upgrades on the western corridor from Burlington to Rutland to allow expansion of Amtrak’s *Ethan Allen* to Burlington. Observers expect contractors to use the money to rebuild track to allow increased train speeds. The state will also spend \$4.5 million on 12 crossings on the western corridor to improve its signal systems and safety. The budget also continues state support for the current *Vermont* and *Ethan Allen* Amtrak services. (TN)

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ELECTRO-MOTIVE DIESEL shipped Metrolink’s first Tier 4 diesel from its Muncie plant June 8. The



Tier 4 F125 Spirit locomotive unit is expected to arrive in Los Angeles by rail near the end of the month. Metrolink was the first commuter railroad in

the country to purchase Tier 4 locomotives, placing its order in 2013. The long-term Metrolink fleet plans call for the purchase of up to 40 new F125s expected to cost approximately \$280 million. A Caterpillar C175-20 diesel, rated at 4,700 HP, powers the F125. It is capable of traveling at a maximum speed of 125 mph pulling up to 10 cars. It is EMD's first new passenger locomotive since the F59PHI. (TN)

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THE CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY (CTA) announced on June 8, 2016 that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the top federal oversight agency for transit agencies, gave the CTA a perfect score on its FTA Triennial Review and found no deficiencies across multiple categories and departments. A perfect review of "zero findings of deficiencies" is the highest score attainable. The FTA awarded CTA a Certificate of Excellence following a review process that included a team of FTA auditors conducting site visits and completing a review of CTA procedures and policies in 17 key areas. The CTA has never before received a perfect review. (RA) Think our MBTA could EVER receive this?-Ed.

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THE LONG-SOUGHT ADDITION of a 18-mile second main track between Albany and Schenectady, NY got underway two weeks ago, when Amtrak's automated Track Laying Machine (TLM) started on the installation of new cement ties and welded rail. This segment of the Empire Corridor, which sees twelve passenger trains a day, has been a major choke point for over 25 years and has often contributed to significant delays. The new second track will have a top speed of 110mph when it enters service in 2017. This project is one of several improvements in progress across NY's Capital Region, including a new Schenectady station; a fourth track at the busy Rensselaer station; lengthened platforms at Rensselaer and new signal systems along the entire route segment between the two cities. (DG)

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THE 2016 CapeFLYER season got off to a poor start on Friday, May 27th, when newly renovated Massachusetts D.O.T. locomotive #1056 (see pics last issue-Ed.) broke down in Braintree in the area of the Green interlocking. The problem was reported to be a failed water pump. Unlike customary practice, the *CapeFLYER* was operating

with just a single locomotive. MBTA commuter rail train #023, led by F40PH-2C locomotive #1064, coupled onto the disabled *CapeFLYER* and pushed it as a double-draft down to Middleborough/Lakeville, making all station stops for train #023. The *CapeFLYER* is scheduled to run express between Braintree and Middleborough/Lakeville. In the meantime, a Mass Coastal crew brought leased F40 Rail World Leasing/San Luis Central locomotive #330 from Rochester, where it had been stored, up to Middleborough/Lakeville. #330 coupled onto the front of #1056 and hauled the *CapeFLYER* down to Hyannis. Due to the quick work of Keolis and Mass Coastal crews, the *CapeFLYER* was only about an hour late into Hyannis. There were 247 passengers onboard the first *CapeFLYER* of the season. (CRD)

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THE YEAR 2016 may be one of the most financially successful years for the MBTA. The Boston-based commuter rail agency says that fare revenue on its commuter rail system has grown nearly 6 percent in the fiscal year that ends June 30, when compared to fiscal year 2015. The agency forecasts that revenues for the fiscal year 2016 will be close to \$215 million. "We are committed to continuing to drive strong revenue growth on the Commuter Rail through enhanced fare collection efforts and use of the latest technology," says MBTA Chief Administrator Brian Shortsleeve. Monthly revenues in May reached \$17.8 million, while during the past 16 months, the average revenue for each month has been around \$17.4 million. In 2015, the agency hired more than 60 conductors to beef up fare collection efforts and reduce fare evasion. MBTA is the nation's sixth busiest commuter rail system. (TN)

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THE MASSACHUSETTS Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Board approved a \$14.8 billion five-year capital investment plan that includes a \$3.8 billion state of good repair backlog reduction for transit in the commonwealth. The MassDOT FY2017-FY2021 capital investment plan funds capital improvements and infrastructure projects, which includes Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) projects across the commonwealth. This plan marks the first time MassDOT and the MBTA worked together to create a comprehensive plan to improve its infrastructure. "These important investments are one of many

steps the MassDOT and MBTA are taking to improve the dependability of our core transit system and provide riders with a more reliable and efficient service," said Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker. "These capital dollars will allow for much-needed upgrades at the T, including signals, track and switches, as well as our roads, bridges and other infrastructure." Approximately 59% of the plan's funding will be spent on improving reliability in the core transportation systems. Another 18% will fund projects to modernize existing infrastructure to accommodate anticipated growth, increased accessibility and new safety standards. "The final capital investment plan represents a transformative, strategic investment plan to restore reliability to the commonwealth's transportation systems, modernize infrastructure and expansion," said MassDOT Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Stephanie Pollack. "I would like to thank all of the MassDOT staff and MBTA staff that worked for months to create this plan, as well as individuals who participated in public meetings and issued their feedback on the plan. Your comments were invaluable to the creation of this capital investment plan." The plan will cut the T's state of good repair backlog from \$7.3 billion to \$3.5 billion over the five-year period. The plan appropriates \$4 billion to repair and rehabilitate aging MBTA infrastructure, including \$1 billion for signals and power improvements, \$1.6 billion for new buses and train cars for the Red, Orange and Green Lines. It also includes \$1.1 billion for the MBTA Green Line Extension project. (RA)

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THE FIRST TWO Siemens SC-44 Charger diesel passenger locomotives have arrived in Colorado for the start of testing at TTCI's Pueblo facility. Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) awarded Siemens a \$US 228m contract in 2014 to supply 32 of the 200km/h diesel-electric locomotives for use on Amtrak services in the states of Illinois, California, Michigan, Missouri and Washington. The locomotives are being assembled at Siemens' plant in Sacramento, California and the first units are due to be accepted by IDOT in December. (RA)



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AEM 7 locomotives, those boxy, stainless steel, electric passenger car pullers graced Northeast Corridor rails for decades. Now they are going the way of the famed Pennsylvania Railroad GG1, which the AEM 7 fleet replaced. Railfans clustered as best as they could on June 18 to catch a glimpse of a special double-headed farewell train with a layover in Wilmington for a tour of the Amtrak shops in that city. Commuter railroads in Baltimore and Philadelphia are expected to retire their remaining AEM 7 locomotives in the next several years. (TN)



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AMTRAK'S 45-YEAR near monopoly on overnight passenger trains could end based on a proposal announced today by the Federal Railroad Administration to introduce a pilot program allowing independent entities to run long-distance trains on as many as three routes. Citing its rule-making authority, the FRA says its proposal is a response to the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or FAST Act, of 2015, in which the Department of

Transportation is directed to implement a program “for selection of eligible petitioners in lieu of Amtrak to operate not more than three long-distance routes.” (TN) This should be interesting, since Amtrak was formed to take the burden of passenger service off the railroads’ back! –Ed.\

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I ENJOYED THESE ARTICLES in this month’s RR magazines and can suggest them to you:

TRAINS

- 2-Mile Trains Trending
- The Merger that Worked
Burlington Northern
- Only at Olean
All Alcos!
- Red Rock Rails
Beautiful dessert scenery on the U.P.
- Ask Trains
Rochelle, IL

MODEL RAILROADER

- Easy Wall Signs with Image Transfer
- A Scenic Showcase in HO Scale
- DL&W Used 2-over-2 Signals
- Install a WOWSound Decoder in an RS-3 Diesel

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

- Railroad Signals
Part 7

CLASSIC TRAINS (Summer 2016)

- Countdown to Conrail-40 Years
 - The Great Northeast Rail Debacle
 - PC: Locomotive Diversity & Adversity
 - LV: The Lehigh Valley in Three Acts
 - CNJ: Crossroads of the Jersey Central
 - RDG: Bee-Line for Profit
 - EL: Phoebe Snow, The Lady and the Train
 - L&HR: From RS3 to C420s
- Conrail’s Executive E Units Fly their old Flags
By Railfans, for Railfans
- What’s in a Photo? Mikados at Antonito
- 2 Hours on Raton: My Most Exciting Morning
- On Riding the “Saint J & LC”
- The Way it Was
 - Inside the Gibson Roundhouse
 - My Dream House by the Tracks
 - Frolicking on the FJ&G

News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Amtrak “News”, Trains Newswire, Railway Age, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE “Callboy”, “The

470”, Patriot Ledger, Wall Street Journal, The Daily Gazette, Cape Rail “Dispatch”.

EDITOR’S NOTES

1. Don’t forget our **Annual Cookout and Pool Party** at Jim’s on July 26th , and then the next week on Saturday we’re having our **Summer “Open House”**.
2. Over the next few weeks, members of the Scenery Committee will be **removing the out-of-scale and out-of-date vehicles** from the layout, and placing them in the glass showcase on the right, as one comes into the train room. The Club decided to model the “transition period” of steam to diesel, which is the mid-late ‘50s, so the modern 18-wheelers, Matchbox-size and clear plastic, toy-like vehicles look out of place and not right on our detailed railroad. If you don’t want your vehicles ending up in the showcase, please remove them yourself and take home. The display of fire equipment, for all eras, during the Open Houses is still a welcome addition. Thanks for your understanding!
3. The **next newsletter** is scheduled for August 22nd, so if you take a train someplace, or ride a train someplace or “railfan” someplace, we’d love to have a story for a future issue. Please keep us in mind and have a great and safe summer!

.....*David N. Clinton*

MEMBER NEWS

Our condolences to **Fred Lockhart** on the passing of his wife, Joan, on June 10th. The many happy memories you have of your lives together, Fred, will live forever in your heart. We are here to help you get over the tough times.

Birthday Celebrations

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations:

John Childs.....July 11th
Fred LockhartJuly 11th
Al TaylorJuly 16th
Roy ColellaJuly 18th

John RobertsAugust 2nd
Jim Ferris.....August 14th
Kurt Kramke (H).....August 16th
Jim SouthAugust 18th
Al McCarty.....August 20th
Bill RoachAugust 26th

RUNNING EXTRA

“Off the rails” film features subway thief

By [Justin Franz](#) | May 25, 2016 TRAINS “Newswire”

Ask rail enthusiasts what they think of Darius McCollum and you're bound to get a variety of opinions, from sympathy to anger. But regardless of what you think of the transit-obsessed 51-year-old you're about to see a lot more of him. McCollum is a New York City man with Aspergers syndrome who police jailed more than 30 times for impersonating railroad employees and stealing subway trains in New York City. He is the subject of a recently released documentary called “Off The Rails” that is making the rounds at film festivals across the country. His story is expected to become the subject of full-length feature film starring Julia Roberts with production beginning this fall.

Published reports say McCollum has liked trains since he was a boy, memorizing the New York City subway map when he was just 8 years old. He spent hours as a teenager riding subway trains, while Metropolitan Transportation Authority employees encouraged his enthusiasm, showing him the ins and outs of the subway system.

Media say McCollum also suffers from untreated Aspergers syndrome, a developmental disorder that

affects his ability to effectively socialize and communicate. That, coupled with his almost obsessive interest in all things transit, is what observers say lead him to take the controls of a subway train in 1981 when he was 15. Since then, police arrested McCollum dozens of times. And published reports say he has spent nearly half his life in prison for stealing subways and buses, most recently after police accused him of taking control of a Greyhound Bus and driving it to Brooklyn in November. He is awaiting trial on charges of criminal impersonation and grand larceny. Toronto-native and documentary filmmaker Adam Irving first learned of McCollum's story in 2012 when he happened upon the Wikipedia page about the man's exploits and says he was instantly interested. “The very first line of his Wikipedia page sounded like something out of a movie, ‘Darius McCollum has spent half his life in prison for stealing buses and trains,’” Irving tells *Trains News Wire*. “I just thought it was a fascinating story... To illegally drive a bus or train on its scheduled route seems like such a ridiculous thing to give up half your life for.”

Other outlets have shown interest in McCollum’s life. Harper's Magazine ran a 2003 story on the man and a New York director wrote a stage play called “Boy Steals Train” based on McCollum's life. The British Broadcasting service aired a performance of the play in 2005.

Irving, who now lives in Los Angeles, says he tracked down McCollum and began corresponding with him while he was in prison. When McCollum was released in 2013, Irving spent weeks interviewing the man. While much of the film includes interviews with McCollum, lawyers, journalists, and Aspergers advocates, it also has reenacted scenes that were filmed in New York City and Toronto, where Irving rented a Toronto Transit Commission subway train for a shoot. McCollum finished the film earlier this year, soon after McCollum's most recent arrest. The film premiered at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival in Durham, N.C., in April and it's being screened at the SF Doc Fest in San Francisco and the Provincetown International Film Festival in Provincetown, Mass., in June.

Irving admits that his film is not “balanced” and that many viewers will have a sympathetic view of McCollum after viewing it.

“I paint him in a sympathetic light because I think he's a

good person and I wanted to take his story beyond the tabloid headlines everyone knows that says 'Crazy Train Kook Strikes Again,'" Irving says. "I want to show people that McCollum is a real person." Irving says he received some push back from rail enthusiasts he talked to while preparing the film who were worried that glorifying the convicted felon would give all railfans a bad name. However, he says most of the film's reviews have been positive. Irving says he hopes the biggest message viewers take away from the film are systematic issues within the criminal justice system. "McCollum should be given help, he should be given therapy," the filmmaker says. "He shouldn't be incarcerated."

Freight Railroads Are Braking for Regulatory Creep

By Edward R. Hamberger

Economic forecasters are projecting the slowest expansion in four years, slashing expectations for the year to only 1.8% in overall GDP growth, according to a new survey from the National Association for Business Economics. Thus continues the weakest recovery from a recession since World War II.

One explanation for this sluggish performance may be the increasing regulatory burden on American industry, including freight railroads. A web of regulations drove the freight-railroad industry to the brink of financial ruin in the 1970s. Regulatory creep since then—and damage caused by rules that create disincentives for railroads to modernize—threatens to hobble the industry again.

The cost of the paperwork alone to be in compliance with safety regula-

tions issued by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is about \$1.5 billion a year, according to analysis by my organization, the Association of American Railroads. That accounts for some 25 million hours worked in the freight-railroad industry in 2015, about 5.3% of the total. And that doesn't include time spent doing paperwork for the myriad other agencies that oversee industry safety. Nor does it include compliance costs beyond paperwork and the impact of the regulations, which can distort the marketplace and disrupt railroads' incentives and ability to invest in infrastructure to meet future demand.

For railroads, two proposed rules epitomize the government's troubling approach to developing regulations. In one, under the guise of safety, the FRA would require railroads to run every train with at least a two-person crew unless special permission is

granted based on unspecified criteria. Crew size has never before been considered a matter for safety regulation, and instead has been addressed between the railroads and their employees under collective bargaining.

When issuing the rule in March, the FRA acknowledged that it lacks any data to support the assertion that two-person crews are safer than one-person crews. In fact, the FRA noted that "it is possible that one-person crews have contributed to the improving safety record" of the rail industry.

This rule was proposed with railroads closing in on implementing a multibillion-dollar safety system known as Positive Train Control—an automated system that stands between human mistakes and accidents, and that will make the world's safest freight rail system even safer. But the FRA's proposed rule deprives railroads of the efficiencies that come with such a system, stranding that aspect of their investment. It effectively freezes the evolution of railroad operations that might affect crew size.

In another proposal under con-

sideration at the Surface Transportation Board, some companies that move goods by rail want to force railroads to open up their tracks and facilities to other railroad competitors in order to obtain lower shipping costs. Doing so would upend the logistical efficiencies that today benefit all customers using the U.S. rail system to move their goods.

The paperwork for safety compliance alone costs about \$1.5 billion a year. And more rules are coming.

Railroads purposely concentrate and move traffic along certain routes to maximize operational efficiencies and fluidity. The railroads' routing practices—honed over the three decades since partial deregulation in 1980—take into account the effectiveness of the entire network. Undoing efficiencies for the benefit of a few shippers would hurt the great majority of businesses that rely on rail.

The importance of the railroad industry to the U.S. economy is hard to overstate. In 2014, major U.S. railroads supported approximately 1.5 million jobs, \$274 billion in annual economic activity, nearly \$90 billion in wages and \$33 billion in tax revenues, according to Towson University's Regional Economic Studies Institute. Railroads have also invested \$25 billion annually on average in their own infrastructure in recent years—a huge public benefit considering the crumbling state of many publicly funded transportation enterprises.

These achievements have been hard won against a powerful and haphazard regulatory tide. The federal regulatory process is in dire need of repair. The Federal Railroad Administration and Surface Transportation Board should develop regulations that adapt to and promote innovation and industry investment in infrastructure, not undermine them.

Mr. Hamberger is president and CEO of the Association of American Railroads.

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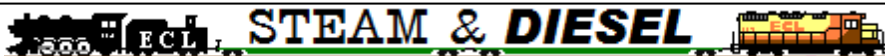
Rupert Murdoch

Executive Chairman, News Corp

Robert Thomson

Chief Executive Officer, News Corp





OPERATION REVIEW

We're back to the weekday Ops session and back to the usual oddity of a semi-frustrating Monday followed by a smooth-as-glass Thursday. Maybe we should have a pre-Op Ops session to get ready for Monday Ops? ☺

Operations Review – Monday, June 20th

We had a good turn-out for a warm weather operation with 19 members signed in. We had seven engineers and two firemen, three local freights (out of six), a Trainmaster, three Yardmasters, a Brakeman, and two Dispatchers. **Yours truly** was dispatching the Mountain Div., while **Will Baker** was doing the Boston line. The session got underway at 8:05 P.M.

We had an experienced rookie as the Cedar Hill Stationmaster in **Skip Burton**. It's not the first time he's been in Cedar Hill passenger. **Skip** has been in there for shows and had years of station terminal experience at **The Old Club™**, but this was his first time in there at a Hingham Ops session. He only had one problem but it was a doozy: switch E-356 kind of "exploded" when VIA train 701 was due in. The train was put into a siding off the mainline, and while an emergency track gang (consisting of **Fred Lockhart**) got to work fixing the switch, the passengers were bussed into the terminal and offered free coffee...but no refunds. *Hey, we got you there, right?*

Sharing Cedar Hill was **Fred Lockhart** handling the freight with his brakeman/trainee, **Gary "Gunny" Mangelynkx**. He said that everything in the Operations Department ran flawlessly. The Track Dept., on the other hand, needed some work. **Fred** said that **Gunny** did well, and that other track repairs will have to wait because as everyone knows by now, you never, ever solder to powered track...ever!

Over in Middleton, **Jack Foley** stepped once more into the breach to plug that hole. He said it went without a hitch, other than the panic call I got saying that someone stole a train right out of his yard (!). I explained that the reason why he couldn't find it was...it hadn't arrived yet (insert sad trombone sound). ☺ **Jack** says he blames sleep deprivation for his confusion.

One of our locals that ran was Cedar Hill's HX-4, the yard peddler. **Bill Roach** got to work right at 6 A.M., and got all but 3 or 4 cars picked up (as there are a lot of cars).

By Paul A. Cutler III

Having switch E-328 break, which was described as "important", did not improve his lot either. Also, **Bill** couldn't find three cars on his pick-up list, which is rather strange since they were there the day before. *Hmm...*

John Sheridan operated the Bethlehem/White River Jct. local in his second attempt at HX-2 mastery. **John** complained that I had stuck him in" when he had to wait for two passenger trains and a freight to pass before he could make a switch move at E-60. Anyways, **John** had a few paperwork issues and reportedly invented new swearwords on the fly. He just about finished the steel "hell" mill when time expired. *I know the blast furnace is hot, but not that hot.*

Our last local that ran was HX-1, the Larson job with **Bob England** at the helm. **Bob** got a bit of a late start, not leaving Cedar Hill freight until 1:00 P.M. As he approached Governor Jct., he charged across the dual gauge diamond just as a commuter train was leaving White River Jct. heading west. As dispatcher, I wouldn't have minded so much except that the lead 2-6-0 derailed crossing the diamond, delaying #725 for 20 minutes. The end result is that **Bob** got the train down to the end of the Larson Branch and just had started making some pick-ups when time ran out.

Birthday Boy **Barry Doland** was allowed out of the home to run one train, Amtrak train #34. It had a little trouble leaving Cedar Hill and a lot of trouble getting into Boston. There are a finite number of tracks in Boston, and the track that #34 was due in on was still occupied by the very late BS-5, a coal train. *That* engineer was having radio troubles, and eventually left over 45 minutes late...without a working radio. **Barry** eventually made landfall in Boston some 42 minutes late.

Engineer **Larry Strumpf** ran 5 trains and had trouble with his first, NH #502. The RDC's were MU'd properly, but the 2nd unit's address was written on the Train Order. "**Oops!**" Ops set-up crew. His next train, MBTA #510 derailed leaving Middleton yard, and the one after that, UP train #43, derailed leaving Boston (but he did pick up the private varnish at Bryant City...the first time that siding has been used). **Larry's** first freight, a pair of NKP Berkshires on train HB-2, didn't like Bethlehem Jct.'s switch E-61 and derailed. After the big hook finished cleaning up and the train rolled out, the 3rd car from the rear launched itself off the track and rolled over at the same place. *Sigh.* **Peter Palica** was a fireman/engineer on train #510, only his second time running a train in operations. Keep it up, **Peter!**

Bob Farrenkopf also contributed to **Larry's** late HB-2. He called dispatch for clearance to leave Middleton with MH-3. Unfortunately, he called Boston Dispatcher **Will Baker** instead of the Mountain Div. dispatcher. **"Oops!" Bob. Will**, thinking **Bob** was running on his division, gave him the okay. At this point, I look up and see MH-3 chugging up the hill heading into the single track Gallery. I think, *"Wait, isn't Larry coming the other way?"* Before I could key my mic, **Larry** calls and says he's got an imminent head-on collision. We get everyone stopped, and we had no choice but to back **Bob** back into the yard to let **Larry** by. Poor HB-2 was 75 minutes late getting into Boston after all that. **Bob**, meanwhile, ran 3 other trains and had a TOFC derail on train HB-6 at Essex Jct.

Seven train engineer **Al Munn** was a busy guy, however his third train should have been hauling antacids instead of passengers. The (too) long UP City of Everywhere #29 suffered a B-unit failure at some point before the hill into the Gallery. Instead of stopping to investigate, **Al** dragged the dead unit all the way to the Dairy. After struggling with uncoupling the working diaphragm-equipped locos (*it was painful to watch*), he was told to Bad Order the dead B-unit on the spot and continue on his way. This little issue made **Al** 83 minutes late and delayed two other trains by 60 minutes.

Engineer **Dave Clinton** and Fireman **Rob Cook** operated six trains combined. They had one derailment with the NH Brill doodlebug #525 at the Essex Jct. grade crossing. After Chief Engineer **Fred Lockhart** investigated after the session, he found that there was a high spike on the outside of the gauge in the wood lining the street. Any unit with a low sideframe would derail trying to pass it. A little tapping fixed the problem. Train BH-7 was even more star-crossed. When passing Middleton Yard, the engineer needs to switch from channel 7 to 2. Instead of stopping or slowing, Engineer **Dave** continued at speed...right through the red signal and into E-6 thrown against him for the oncoming passenger train. **"Oops!" Dave.** Then when approaching Cedar Hill, they missed the off-ramp at Bethlehem Jct. and got halfway to the passenger terminal before noticing. **"Oops!"** again. Their other four trains were uneventful.

Chris Barlow got into the action with 5 trains of his own. The first was the aforementioned coal train BS-5 that was delayed by radio trouble (which was fixed enroute). He also ran the NH Brill doodlebug and it derailed at Essex Jct. just like **Rob & Dave.** Alaska RR Train #58 was an hour late leaving Cedar Hill due to "issues". **Chris** didn't elaborate. Lastly, MS-9 got to Bethlehem Iron Co. 16 minutes early, mainly because the 25mph speed limit was gleefully ignored.

Lastly (and I do mean last), **Paul Agnew** managed to squeak in at the buzzer and ran one train, NH train #547. First he called the wrong dispatcher, then ran by Bryant City and blamed the Rolokron anti-skid braking system.

Trainmaster **Paul Pando** reported that all scheduled trains were run and one Form 19 was completed with the pick-up of the private car at Bryant City.

Boston Dispatcher **Will Baker** said "How did we get so late when we were doing so well?" Fortunately, we recovered in time to run all the trains.

Over on the Mountain Div., there were some interesting meets going on as trains that were off the schedule met scheduled trains. The frustration level up in the tower was at times a palpable thing as radios didn't work, trains were late, and derailments slowed everything down. We struggled at times, but the schedule recovered. It was a successful night, when all was said and done.

Operations Review – Thursday, June 23rd

But as difficult as Monday was at times, Thursday was absolutely glorious. I was in the tower flying solo, and we had just 13 operators signed in. However, the yards were fully staffed and with 5 mainline engineers we got it done in superb fashion.

Up in Cedar Hill passenger, **Jack Foley** got a turn as the Stationmaster. He pointed out that some of the paperwork was not correct based on switches thrown or clear. There has been some work done in the area of late, which may have changed the switch polarity. **Jack** did turn around a couple trains in between inbounds and outbounds, and found a couple of dead spots.

On the other side of the aisle was **Fred Lockhart** back in Cedar Hill freight. He noted that the inbound NKP Berks on train BH-1 derailed on E-64, but otherwise it was pretty boring...in a good way. He even started to turn some freights before time expired.

My father, **Paul Cutler, Jr.**, ran eight trains as an engineer. *That's a lot of trains.* Pretty much everything was on time and he had no major trouble...except for a dispatching error on my part that almost caused him a head on collision. NH RDC train #547's engineer was due to leave Boston at 4:28 P.M. That engineer, **Dave Clinton**, got involved in unsuccessfully turning on the headlights on the trailing unit. This caused him to be late leaving, and meanwhile my **dad's** BH-1 left on time at 4:33 P.M. Since #547 would then be stuck behind the slow freight all the way to Middleton, I decided to re-route the freight up the left-hand main to the next interlocking at Minot Jct., which would allow #547 to pass him. Unfortunately, I had lost track of where **Will Baker's** SB-6 was, and a passing operator **Paul Agnew** had to grab SB-6 to prevent the head on at Minot Jct. *Thanks, Paul!*

With five trains under his belt, **Bob Farrenkopf** really only had trouble with his first train, the UP City of Everywhere #34. It derailed at least 4 times on the Mountain Div., yet hadn't derailed at all on Monday. It made **Bob** an hour late in Boston. His only other comment was with the FL9 horn and how weird it sounded. *Because it's a whistle, not a horn.*

Dave Clinton had five trains on his schedule. He had no problems, for once, but he thinks that the Rapido LRC (Light, Rapid, Comfortable) should be the LSC (Light, Slow, Comfortable) as the top speed is less than 60 mph.

Next time should be in August after the Summer Open House. I'll see you there!

Paul Cutler III 

Mr. Local Freight **John Sheridan** finished up HX-2 from Monday night. He started a little early, but I figured what the heck since we had plenty of locals to run. In fact, we still have two that never ran at all (MX-3 & MX-4). He complained about a lightweight Soo Line covered hopper and a low grab on an ECL box. **John** then grabbed a hold of Larson's HX-1 and HX-3 and did all the pick-ups for both trains before outlating.

Will Baker had some trouble with SB-6's power, a N&W 2-6-6-4. After the almost head on at Minot Jct., he had a pretty time-consuming derailment on E-33. After that, it was discovered that he was missing his caboose. The caboose was not found until after the operation critique. It and 4 ECL hoppers were still under the steel mill. **Will's** five other trains ran almost on time or even early.

With five of his own trains, **Chris Barlow** even ran the freight Extra 801 (consisting of all his own equipment, oddly enough). Train MB-4 had a number of coupler height issues that resulted in break in twos and low gladhands snagging on diamonds and grade crossings. It was an hour late into Boston. On LM-2, he had a dropped drawbar over at West Middleton near E-1. After investigating, the coupler cover was found all the way back in Great Lakes at E-23. We figure that the tension on the coupler kept it on the car, but when he slowed at E-1 to enter Middleton, the coupler fell off the car.

Al Taylor arrived to finish up HX-4, the Cedar Hill yard peddler. He finished up the pick-ups from Monday, and got all but a dozen cars set out. Switch E-311 had a broken point which slowed him down, and he had a bad order a 75' TOFC when the coupler fell off. "Still fun," said **Al**.

In Middleton, **Jim South** took over and had a few notes. He said that the UP-5 in West Middleton doesn't work, the coal tower has a broken chute which fouls the track below it, and the turntable is not easy to line up.

Tucked up into Hudson Falls (as a rookie) was **Paul Agnew**. He had some of the usual trouble with clogged flangeways and the like, but the area ran well overall. He had multiple derailments with switch M-3 with different pieces of equipment, so something may be awry there. He got most of the pick-ups done and some of the set outs. **Paul** said he may have painted himself into a corner or two, but he ran out of time. ☺

Paul Pando, Trainmaster, said it started a little slow, but all trains were run plus the Form 19 Extra. This freight extra took 2 hours to run around the layout, so keep that in mind for future operations.

Up in the tower, I was having a grand old time. By my count, around 50% of all train times (arrivals and departures) were on time or even early. This has to be some kind of record. Scheduled meets took place when and where they were supposed to. Trains were MU'd properly and mostly stayed on the rail. Radio communication was good and clear with every operator. This is how it is supposed to be done, gentlemen. Kudos all around for the Thursday crew!

