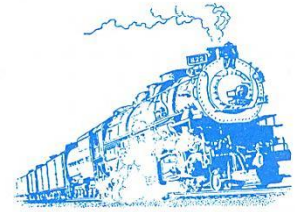


# The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

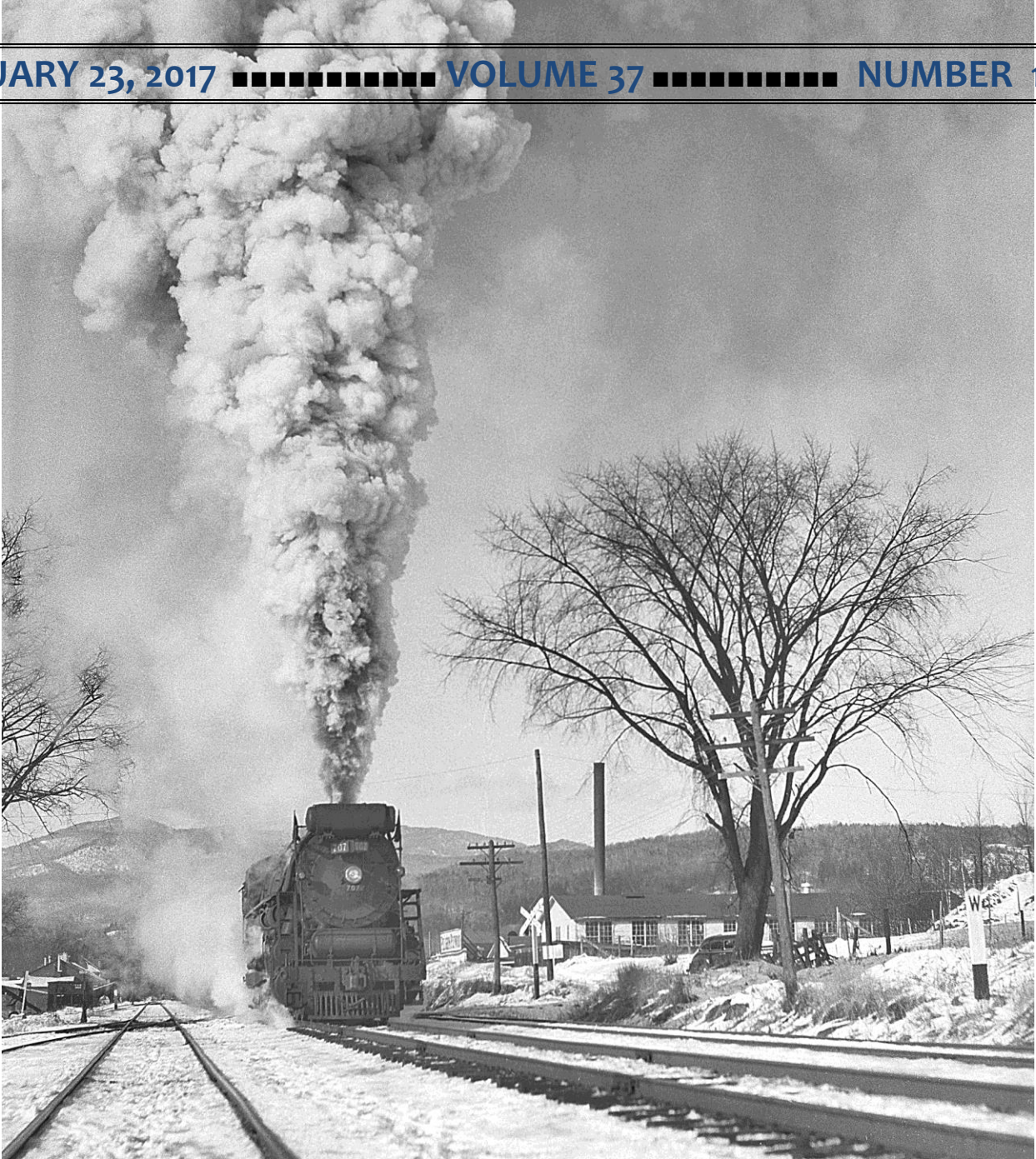
Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



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JANUARY 23, 2017 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 37 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 1

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Imagine this sight, sound and smell...if only there was a  
"time machine"!

# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr.
“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Cape Cod News.....	Skip Burton
Boston <u>Globe</u> Reporter.....	Brendan Sheehan
Boston <u>Herald</u> Reporter.....	Jim South
<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. ©2017

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VOLUME 37 ■■■■■ NUMBER 1 ■■■■■ JANUARY 2017

## 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 (‘17)

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**ON THE COVER:** Central Vermont 2-10-4 #707 smokes it up in Waterbury, Vermont, February 1957. The last steam locomotives purchased by the CV (Alco 1928), the 10 “Texas”-types were considered by many to be the smallest of the wheel arrangement but the largest locomotives in New England. Photographer George Corey was very lucky to see these handsome locos in person!



# JACK D. BRYANT

June 5, 1927-December 20, 2016

Our fellow member and brother, Jack Bryant passed away on December 20th, after a long, debilitating illness; he was 89. A member of the SSMRC since 2003, Jack was a collector and modeler of military train equipment, his specialty. His interest in this just may have been sparked by his being a member of the Tuskegee Airmen. The Tuskegee Airmen is the popular name of a group of [African-American](#) military pilots (fighter and bomber) who fought in [World War II](#). Officially, they formed the [332nd Fighter Group](#) and the [477th Bombardment Group](#) of the [United](#)



[States Army Air Forces](#). The name also applies to the navigators, bombardiers, mechanics, instructors, crew chiefs, nurses, cooks and other support personnel for the pilots. The [Tuskegee](#) Airmen were the first African-American military aviators in the United States Armed Forces. During World War II, black Americans in many U.S. states were still subject to the [Jim Crow laws](#) and the American military was [racially segregated](#), as was much of the federal government. The

Tuskegee Airmen were subjected to discrimination, both within and outside the army. In 2007, President George Bush awarded him the Congressional Medal of Honor, as a member of the Tuskegee Airmen

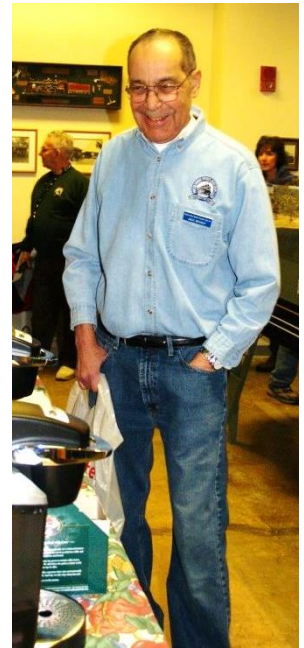
Jack was a very popular member, best remembered for starting (in 2005) “Jack’s Coffee Shop”, which he ran during our Shows in the Train Room. Members brought in sweet “goodies” for him to sell, along with fresh-brewed coffee he prepared; always a success, with the sweets usually selling out. He was thought of so much that the members voted last year to name the beautiful, just completed city scene “Bryant City”! (While under construction it had the unimaginative name of “Corner City”.) Jack built a unique military train, which is displayed on the south wall in the Train Room.



He was proud of his past accomplishments, but not a braggart. He ran his own Boston business right up to recent years, was an officer of several Societies and business Associations and a member of the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group, better known as the “Red Tails”. One evening he presented the movie with that title to an overflow group of members and friends, with a Q&A session afterwards. He had brought four of his buddies from that group and it was an extremely educational and

interesting evening. He frequently brought his wife, Vernita, to the Shows to show off the railroad and for her to see all the work that had been done.

We were proud to call Jack a friend and fellow member, too. We shall miss him and the history-making stories he related. He is with those buddies again in a better place. God bless you Jack. Long live the happy memories of your friendship.



David N. Clinton

# FORM 19 ORDERS

## AMHERST TRAIN SHOW @ BIG E

Saturday & Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup>

## JANUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## DECODER & LOCO TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> 8 p.m.

## TRAINS 'N TOUCHDOWNS

Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> All day

## FEBRUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## SHOW COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> after B.M.

## SHOW COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, after BM

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>

## FEBRUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Don Pierce** on winning this month's 50/50 Raffle!

At Our ANNUAL CALENDAR CONTEST, the following members found that the loco pictured below (New Haven I-5 4-6-4 "Shoreliner" from Baldwin) was the only streamlined steam locomotive produced for a New England-based railroad:

**Al Taylor**  
**Jack Foley**  
**Bill Garvey**  
**Doug Buchanan**  
**Savery Moore**  
**Roger St. Peter**  
**Ron Clough**  
**Paul Cutler III**

**Jim South**  
**Coley Coleman**  
**Will Baker**  
**Marty Melamed**  
**Rick Sutton**  
**Dan Peterson**  
**Paul Agnew**  
**Fred Lockhart**



New Haven I-5 "Shoreliner" (Hudson) on Sharon Hill

Thanks to the following members for supporting this contest with their donation of a RR calendar:

Fred Lockhart	Dan Peterson
Al Taylor	Dave Clinton
Jack Foley	Roger St. Peter
Jim South	Ron Clough
Kurt Kramke	



For MARCH: One of **Al Taylor's** famous "word find" puzzles. "All Aboard Amtrak" is available in the contest answer rack, just inside the door to the train room, on top of the old wooden display case. Don't forget your name and good luck!

Al has mastered a couple of new programs and promises to be making up some new word-find and crossword puzzles for future issues

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Here we are in a New Year at the club and we need to make a plan for this year for what we want or need to get done, if for no other reason so the railroad committees can plan a budget. Looking back first, I see a couple of things that need our attention: first there is a "punch list", which I presented to the members quite a while ago, April 2015 to be exact. There were a lot of items on it, some were major projects and a lot have been



completed, which is good. There are several more that need completion before we expand. The original goal was to complete the majority of them on the existing railroad, before we started any expansion. The second issue is maintenance of the railroad. Since last summer, it seems that a lot of time has been devoted to this, and it is not that unreasonable considering the size of our railroad. The one issue that bothers me the most has been the failure of the switch machines powering the frogs and the LEDs. In the beginning, I was replacing the machines. After doing a dozen or so, Bob England felt there was a better way and designed a circuit board to handle the function of powering the frogs and LEDs at a reasonable cost; about a quarter of what a switch machine costs.

Moving forward, I will post a meeting for February so we can discuss what are the most important items to be done this year. This is meant to give you a heads-up, as at the present time we have some trackwork projects that have been approved that could be started right away. The first is the new trackwork in the trolley area--we need several turnouts built. Rob Cook had volunteered to build them but, unfortunately, I am looking for another volunteer or two with experience to build them. The second project is to relocate the Larson Branch. That project I will suggest we hold off until after the March Show, because it will take the Passenger Terminal lead tracks out of service and will disrupt the trackwork where the Larson Branch leaves the mainline.

I would appreciate suggestions from members on areas of importance they think should be considered this year. That's it for this month.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

SEMAPHORE  
MEMORIES

**JANUARY 2012** (5 years ago)

•Pershing Square Equity Fund to try to get Hunter Harrison in to CP and oust present management.

- VIA Rail Canada suspends the Chaleur service to Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula, due to unsafe bridges.
- Canadian National completes merger of Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range, Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific and Wisconsin Central Ltd.
- Conway Scenic trades U23B #2820 and B23-7 #1943 for former Finger Lakes GP9 #1751.
- Woodland Scenics Company burns to the ground in Linn Creek, MO.
- 30 years ago, Conrail engineer Ricky Gates, under the influence of marijuana, proceeded with his light-engine move through red signals and into the path of the 128 MPH Washington-Boston *Colonial*, causing 16 deaths. FRA instituted strict drug and alcohol-testing policies.
- Metro-North Commuter Railroad takes four months to return to normal schedule, after Hurricane Irene.
- Indonesia Railway staff hangs concrete balls above tracks to try to prevent commuters from riding on the roofs of passenger cars.
- Amtrak lets contracts to build 70 new electric locomotives and 130 long-distance, single-level passenger cars.
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority moves ahead with plan to build layover and maintenance facility in Brunswick for *Downeaster* trains.
- Track being installed on benchwork section between Third Leg and staging yards. Scenery committee working on Back Shop structures in Transfer Table section, as well as city around Trolley Area. Wiring on Mountain Div. mainline and first Classification Yard.
- JANUARY 2007** (10 years ago)
- Former *Broadway Limited* streamlined observation "Mountain View" donated to Railroaders Museum in Altoona, PA by Bennett Levin.
- MBTA announces plan to buy 38 new locomotives and 75 double-decker coaches.
- Mt Washington Cog Rwy converts steam loco "Waumbek" to burn biodiesel, instead of coal.
- Flying Yankee Restoration Group awards contract to New Hampshire Central RR in N. Stratford, NH to restore truck sideframes.
- Law passed allowing MBTA Police to write tickets up to \$250 for fare evaders and RMV suspends licenses for unpaid tickets.
- New Jersey Transit introduces bi-level passenger cars for the first time; will operate Trenton to New York City.
- JANUARY 2002** (15 years ago)
- P1K introduces popular Budd RDC cars.
- Amtrak's *Downeaster* service doing better than anticipated, after 30-days of operation.
- MBTA announces new computerized fare card, to be introduced by mid-2004.
- VIA Rail Canada purchases 139 "Nightstar" passenger cars from the UK, and renames them "Renaissance".
- Guilford closes Yards #7 & 8 in Somerville; the last freight yards on the North Side of Boston.

✳️ "Cranberry World", a long-time attraction in Plymouth, to be moved to Edaville in the summer.

✳️ Norfolk County RR Club formed. Meets every two months at Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood.

✳️ Hingham Long Range Planning Committee presents plans for Bare Cove Park construction projects.

✳️ New Club Car available: Quincy Wholesale Grocery Ice Hatch Reefer by Athearn.

#### **JANUARY 1997** (20 Years Ago)

✳️ "Viewliner" sleepers replace "Heritage" 10-6 sleepers on *Lake Shore Limited*, leaving only the *Night Owl* with "Heritage" sleepers.

✳️ VIA Rail Canada becomes first railroad in the World to offer reservations through the Internet.

✳️ Double-tracking of ex-B&A between Westborough and Worcester completed.

✳️ Rail and ties removed from ex-B&M line between Woodsville & Littleton, NH.

✳️ Bombardier chooses Plattsburg, NY for new factory.

✳️ Bids taken for \$33 million restoration of Worcester Union Station.

✳️ Army Corps of Engineers enters Greenbush fray, with concerns about alternative study.

#### **JANUARY 1992** (25 Years Ago)

✳️ Amtrak takes delivery of GE Dash 8-32BWH locomotives in "Pepsi can" scheme.

✳️ Operations in memory of member John Gore, who passed away suddenly.

✳️ Valley RR in CT, sells its Chinese-built Mike to the New York, Susquehanna & Western.

✳️ New visitor center at Horseshoe Curve outside Altoona, PA, to open.

✳️ Semaphore Publishing Co. moves to new factory at Riverside, courtesy Doland Construction Co.

#### **JANUARY 1987** (30 Years Ago)

✳️ Amtrak suffers worst accident in its history at Chase, MD, when engineer Ricky Gates, under the influence of drugs, moved his Conrail locomotives into the path of *Colonial*, killing 16 passengers and crew.

✳️ Connecticut D.O.T. purchases two FL9s from Metro North and paints in "McGinnis Scheme".

✳️ N&W announces that "A" #1218 to be refurbished and steamed for excursion service.

✳️ NJ Transit announces a monorail to be built, connecting Newark Airport with Northeast Corridor.

✳️ Fore River RR becomes Fore River Railway, leased by Colorado & Eastern RR Co. GE 70-tonners gone.

#### **JANUARY 1982** (35 Years Ago)

✳️ Stan Darcy introduces Car Registration at SSMRC.

✳️ Completion of South Division return loop (blocks 280-106) in time for March Show.

✳️ Amtrak takes delivery of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Amfleet coaches and Lounge-Cafes, with more leg room and curtains on the larger windows.

✳️ Maine Central donates old Union Station (Portland) clock to City of Portland, where it will be installed in Congress Square.

✳️ P&W awarded all the Conrail lines in the State of RI and trackage rights over Amtrak to Old Saybrook, CT.

✳️ Doug Buchanan makes prophetic statement: "Getting things done around here is like mating elephants—it's done at a high level, it's accomplished with a lot of roaring and screaming and it takes two years to get any results!"

## ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

**Paul Agnew** was first on the scene with an old Stewart C628 in Pennsy "Brunswick Green". He experimented with fitting a sound board inside the chassis, but found it was not going to happen. On a "higher up" model, his W&R brass New Haven I-5 "Shoreliner" (Hudson), he had found that the rubber drive shaft had worn out. Not unusual for brass steam. He replaced with new rubber and his streamlined loco (remember the contest?) was ready to show its stuff between New Haven and Boston.

**Paul Cutler** was busy installing and adjusting the Bachrus Speedometer on the test tract. Joe Dumas had donated this a couple of years ago, and he was waiting for the new software to be available for our use on DCC. Pretty neat, especially the speed charts for both forward and backward operation, which the program produces.

**Bob Farrenkopf** worked on his Atlas RS3, dressed in MEC "Harvest Yellow". He tuned up the locomotive and replaced a broken power wire, which runs from the truck to DCC board.

**Dan Peterson** made an appearance, after a long-time absence from the clinic. He had found that one of his Atlas C&NW RS36 locos was not picking up power from one of the trucks. (This is found out many times, when we use paper towel to clean wheels and the truck that remains on the powered rail does not pick up power, so the loco won't run to clean the wheels which are on the paper towel. Upon investigation, he found that one of the wires



from the truck held onto the circuit board by the small, black, plastic clips had been shoved through the hole in the board too far. This meant that the insulation was touching the circuit board, instead of the wire strands. By slightly pulling it back through the hole and re-attaching the black clip, everything worked fine. It's really a good idea to remove all the black clips and toss them. Solder the wires to the contacts on the board for sure-fire contact.

**Ye Ed** brought an unusual CF7, which had been painted in Amtrak's "phase 3" paint, but with what looks like a hand-painted "pointless arrow" from "phase 1" paint. Probably done in a local shop and a "one of a kind" deal. The Athearn "R-T-R" model needed a decoder and the model came with a 9-pin plug, so the DH123 fit right in. Sounded good for an Athearn, too, and even had "mini-bulbs" at both ends.

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for his assistance and for preparing the Model Shop beforehand. Our next clinic will be **Thursday, January 5, 2017**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. Everyone is welcome!

## POTPOURRI

**THE FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT** Control Board (FMCB) of the MBTA voted Dec. 19 to amend the Ruggles Station Transportation Project contract with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc, (VHB) to expand the project's design and accessibility improvements. A contract extension to December 31, 2019, was also granted as part of the amendment. Originally authorized in March 2012 for \$1.5 million, this project contract already includes the layout and design of a brand new 800-foot Commuter Rail platform at Ruggles Station to service Track 2, which is currently inaccessible to passengers embarking and disembarking trains. The new platform will increase capacity and improve access to the neighboring community including the Longwood Medical and Academic Area, the largest employment center near Ruggles Station, and Northeastern University (NEU).The MBTA says "the current physical limitations of the

station platform, in conjunction with the daily congestion along the corridor from MBTA and Amtrak trains, have made it difficult to offer a complete schedule of trains at the station with 30% of inbound trains bypassing Ruggles completely. Following construction of the new platform, a significantly increased number of trains will be able to stop at Ruggles." For an additional amount of \$1.6 million approved by the FMCB, the scope of the project is expanded to improve station accessibility further for commuters at Ruggles, a multi-modal station served by thirteen bus routes, seven private bus shuttles, the Orange Line, and three Commuter Rail lines. A completely reconstructed lower busway with a new



elevator, wider sidewalks, and concrete bus berths has been included. Additional paths of travel, enhanced pedestrian safety and security measures, further interior and exterior building code-related improvements, east and west access to the station with canopies, and the replacement of four existing station elevators are also included. The contract amendment will allow VHB to complete the design of these additional elements and provide construction phase services for the project. (RA)

●●●●●●  
**EXACTLY FOUR MONTHS** after Genesee & Wyoming's announcement that it had reached an agreement to purchase the 516-mile Providence & Worcester Railroad, the Surface Transportation Board granted authority for G&W to acquire control of the Class III railroad. The decision came through on Dec. 15. P&W shareholders voted overwhelmingly to approve the sale on Oct. 26, and since that time G&W has purchased most shares. Providence & Worcester has been held in trust as

G&W awaited the STB's decision. The STB ruling subjects G&W to certain protections for P&W employees. G&W also assures the board that it will not change its operations in a way that negatively affects Springfield Terminal Railway and its interchange with CSX Transportation in Worcester, Mass., where the two railroads use approximately three miles of P&W trackage. Although the STB ruling comments on Providence & Worcester's passenger excursion operations, it does not impose any conditions. The decision discusses G&W's willingness to negotiate in the future with a local tourism commission that has been a long-time sponsor of train excursions as well as the Boston Surface Railroad Co., which proposes to operate commuter trains in the Worcester, Mass. to Providence, R.I. corridor. (TN)

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**CANADIAN PACIFIC** announced on Dec. 22 that its 18th annual Holiday Train has collected donations of \$1.2 million and 250,000 pounds of food to this point. CP says "as food banks continue to count the money raised and weigh the food donated at each stop this year, the program is on track to have raised more than C\$13 million and four million pounds of food since its inception in 1999. With the need for food banks continually increasing in both Canada and the U.S., the importance of the CP Holiday Train program in the community is also increasing," said E. Hunter Harrison, CP's Chief Executive Officer. "Beyond food and monetary donations the CP Holiday Train generates goodwill, raises spirits and helps people start the holidays off on the right foot. We thank the communities across our network for supporting the program and giving back to their neighbors." (RA)

●●●●●●

**AFTER MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS**, the MBTA and Boston Carmen's Union Local 589 have agreed to a new collective bargaining agreement. The MBTA says the agreement "will save the MBTA \$80 million over the next four years and more than \$750 million over the next 25 years while also fundamentally reforming overtime and other long-standing work rules to lower MBTA costs and improve productivity." The agreement was ratified at a Local 589 membership meeting Sunday and approved by the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board on Dec. 19. The agreement, which runs from January 1, 2017 through June 30, 2021, "protects certain elements of core work currently

performed by Local 589 members, such as operating buses and subway vehicles," the MBTA says. "The MBTA retains the right to reduce costs and innovate through flexible contracting in other areas, including possible new late night bus service and new bus routes, in-station customer service delivery, and the adoption of lifecycle maintenance programs for new vehicles."

"Change is never easy, but this agreement marks a new day in the relationship between T management and its largest union," said MBTA Acting GM Brian Shortsleeve, noted that this is the first time in more than a half century that a contract between the MBTA and the Carmen's Union has been opened early. "We are pleased that the MBTA and Local 589 were able to find common ground on a game plan that will improve the MBTA's cost structure by altering the status quo in a way that will improve service for riders, fiscal accountability for taxpayers, and provide stability to our employees." The MBTA says "while the agreement will significantly lower the projected rate of annual wage growth over the next four years for existing employees, it does not reduce their current wage rates. New bus and rail operators will start at lower wage rates but will still be able to achieve the top wage rates in their classifications though over a longer period of time. (RA)

●●●●●●

**CSX TRANSPORTATION'S** National Gateway project reached a new milestone in the days leading up to Christmas when the first double stack-equipped intermodal train rolled through the newly completed Virginia Avenue tunnel in Washington, D.C. Rail officials greeted train Q135-22 as it exited the tunnel on the morning of Dec. 23. The train was in route to North Baltimore, Ohio, from Portsmouth, Va., with two CSX Tier 4 ET44AHs and a string of double-stack container cars. The first phase of the Virginia Avenue tunnel project is the last of more than 60 clearance projects that comprise the \$850 million National Gateway project. Double-stack trains are now able to operate between the railroad's North Baltimore, Ohio, intermodal facility and Portsmouth, Va., along former Baltimore & Ohio and Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac rails. The National Gateway project is a public and private partnership that brings double stack intermodal service from North Carolina, north to Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and west across



Maryland, Pennsylvania, and into northwestern Ohio. Crews have been working on tunnel clearances and other infrastructure since the project launched in 2008. A tunnel clearance restriction at Howard Street tunnel in Baltimore is one of the last obstacles preventing double-stack service on the entire length of the corridor. Maryland transportation officials recently submitted a grant request to the U.S. Department of Transportation to help fund the double-stack clearance project at Howard Street tunnel and a series of other highway-related height obstructions near Baltimore. If approved, the funding would notch part of the tunnel and lower the right-of-way in other locations.



CSX Transportation ET44AH No. 3319 emerges from the newly completed Virginia Avenue Tunnel with double stack containers in tow. The train is in route to North Baltimore, Ohio, from Portsmouth, Va., along the route of CSX Transportation's National Gateway project.

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**WICK MOORMAN** takes *Trains'* editors' top honor as the number 1 story for 2016. Because of who he is: a smart railroader, a lover of trains, and a businessman, Wick was the perfect person to succeed Joe Boardman as Amtrak President and CEO this year. Before then, though, he also showed us how tenacious he can be, picking apart Canadian Pacific's bid for Norfolk Southern point-by-point and publicly lifting spirits of railroaders who may have even briefly thought that a big red takeover from Canada was inevitable. With Wick in charge of Amtrak, certain folks were hoping for immediate orders for Superliner 3 equipment, steam excursions galore, and an urgent diesel locomotive order to replace the passenger railroad's aging intercity fleet. As unlikely as these fantasies are, Moorman will be great for Amtrak for other reasons. Moorman is a smart man and a keen leader. Amtrak has a new political maze to

navigate in Washington — and would have regardless of the outcome in November — but Wick knows this. There is no magic potion for “success” anymore. Amtrak was created to maintain the status quo of railroad passenger operations, and has largely succeeded in that endeavor. You can still take an overnight train from New York to Chicago, or reach the border outposts of northern Montana by rail. More importantly, Amtrak has maintained a national network, unifying the country, both physically with its trains and politically with its network. He's unlikely to surprise us, but he will work to improve the organization so that renewal and growth is possible under future leadership. His basic understanding of railroading and customer service will see to that. He also stepped in to run Amtrak for a \$1-a-year salary when it seemed as though few others would consider the position. That sense of duty, more than his past celebration of railroad heritage, make him worthy of honors. In recent weeks, Wick has told news media that he will be a plumber for Amtrak, fixing leaks and improving how operations work. He says he won't be around for long, just long enough to hand over a good company to the next person. If there's anyone who can achieve that, it's Wick. For his sense of duty to railroading and his exceptional classiness, *Trains* editors select Wick Moorman and his elevation to Amtrak CEO as the number 1 story of 2016. (TN)

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**ONE OF THE LAST LOCOMOTIVES** of a lesser known eastern Class I railroad is headed to Steamtown for possible restoration. The Ontario and Western Railway Historical Society confirms it has moved former New York, Ontario & Western GE 44-ton centercab diesel No. 105 by truck to Scranton. The locomotive was located in Winslow, N.J. Society members say the locomotive will be railed from the Delaware-Lackawanna yard where they deposited it this week and to Steamtown National Historic Site where it is expected to go on display and possibly be restored. (TN)

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**THE MBTA IS REINTRODUCING** its weekend ski train.

The train will operate from North Station in Boston to take skiers to Wachusett



Mountain Ski Area. Customers may board at North Station, disembark at the new Wachusett Station on the Fitchburg Line, and travel on a free shuttle to Wachusett Mountain. The fully accessible Wachusett Station opened in September 2016. Ski trains are specially equipped with ski and snowboard racks. The MBTA will evaluate snow and ski season later in the winter. (RA)

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**CHINESE-BASED FREIGHT TRAINS** will soon be making their way across two continents and the English Channel for deliveries near London. BBC News reports that London will become the 15th destination point for freight trains originating in manufacturing centers in China. The initiative is part of the Communist country's efforts to revive overland trade in the 21st century reminiscent of Silk Road routes from a millennium prior. The train, which has sections that terminate in Madrid, Spain, and Hamburg, Germany, will take approximately two weeks to traverse 12,000 miles, eight time zones, and several break-of-gauge changes. It is unclear when the first London-bound trains departed and when it will arrive. (See next article) The service is much less expensive than air freight and is typically faster than ocean-freight schedules, which may take between 24 and 36 days to arrive in Europe from China. (RA)

●●●●●●

**A rail freight depot** in East London was the destination earlier this month for the first container train traveling between China and the United Kingdom. After travelling 7,450 miles from Yiwu in Zhejiang province near Shanghai, it arrived at DB Cargo UK's London Eurohub terminal in Barking, Essex, just eight miles from the center of London. The yard is connected to the High Speed 1 rail line from the (English) Channel Tunnel. Yiwu is about 190 miles south of Shanghai. Chinese embassy officials joined media, local politicians, business leaders, and railroad industry personnel to greet the train. Trade Minister Zhu Qin from the Chinese embassy in London spoke warmly of the growing commercial trade that the service will support. (TN)

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**THE TWO EASTERN** Class I railroads are taking additional steps to improve safety with plans to equip more locomotives with inward facing cameras and cell phone detection technology. A recent CSX Transportation employee bulletin obtained by *Trains News Wire* informed train service employees

to expect more inward facing cameras and cell phone detectors inside of its locomotive fleet. According to the document, the detectors are triggered whenever a mobile device is turned on and available to a cellular network. If a device has its cellular and Internet functions turned off, or to "airplane mode," the detectors will not trigger an alert. (TN)

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**MBTA ANNOUNCED** Thursday that it would not extend its contract with commuter rail operator Keolis beyond 2022. The announcement comes after months of complaints lodged at the operator for poor performances, particularly during winter, and losing millions of dollars. Keolis was first awarded the eight-year, \$2.7 billion to operate MBTA's commuter rail operations in 2014. NBC Boston reports that although there is an option to extend the contract for two years, MBTA will not do so and plans on having a new deal signed before the current contract ends. Keolis however will have a chance to bid for the new contract when it's up. "MassDOT will continue working closely with Keolis to provide excellent service to our customers for the duration of the contract," Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack said in a statement to NBC Boston. "In keeping with good business practices, the MBTA is committed to evaluate the contract structure and initiate a re-procurement before the current contract expires. The decision not to extend the current eight-year contract is not a reflection of Keolis' performance; indeed, I fully expect that Keolis would compete as part of the re-procurement." Keolis tells NBC Boston that it remains committed to serving Boston. (TN)

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**THE RETURN OF THE LEGENDARY** ski train between Denver and Winter Park, Colo., is finally here.

On Saturday, January 7th, Amtrak's *Winter Park Express*, informally known as the Ski Train, departed Denver Union Station for the first time since 2009. The train will run along the former Denver and Rio Grande Western Moffat Line every Saturday and Sunday until March. (TN)

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**THE FRIENDS** of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania (Strasburg, PA) and the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society have begun a campaign to preserve five Pennsylvania Railroad steam locomotives. The

locomotives are slated for display in a new roundhouse to be constructed at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. During a ceremony to welcome PRR E6s 4-4-2 No. 460 back into the museum collection following a six-year cosmetic restoration, Friends President Don Lotz announced the "Ready for the Roundhouse" project. The PRR steam locomotives will be cosmetically restored, media-blasted and painted. The five engines are:

- M1b 4-8-2 No. 6755, built at Juniata Shops in Altoona, Pa. in 1930
- K4s 4-6-2 No. 3750, built at Juniata in 1920
- L1s 2-8-2 No. 520, built by Baldwin in 1916
- H10s 2-8-0 No. 7688 built by Lima in 1915
- B6sb 0-6-0 No. 1670 built at Juniata in 1916

The locomotives are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The majority of the work will be undertaken by an outside contractor, Sandman's Sandblasting & Coatings of Manchester, N.Y., and will be overseen by Museum rolling stock curator/restoration shop manager Allan Martin. Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society President Steve Staffieri said the Society would match all donations to the project up to \$50,000 through April 15, 2017. The Philadelphia Chapter of the PRRT&HS kicked off the campaign with a \$1,000 donation. The five locomotives will be also the focus of the Friends' annual fund drive.

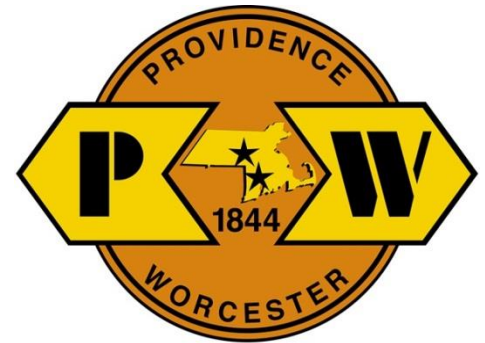


The famous "Lindbergh Engine" No. 460 will join the five engines in the new roundhouse. Museum staff, volunteers and contractors spent about 29,000 hours restoring the engine to its 1950s look. For now it will be displayed in the Museum's

100,000-square-foot Rolling Stock Hall until the new roundhouse is completed. No. 460 earned its nickname on June 11, 1927, when it was used by the International News Reel Co. to rush film footage from Washington to New York. The newsreel company filmed a special ceremony at the U.S. Capitol honoring aviator Charles A. Lindbergh after his nonstop solo flight from New York to Paris. Since the Museum's restoration shop was built in 1998, artifacts that have undergone various stages of restoration or preservation work. Railroad museum officials say the state's Historical & Museum Commission has approved all documents and drawings for the proposed six-stall, \$6.1 million roundhouse. He expects the Commission to solicit bids for construction soon, with groundbreaking in the spring. Construction would be completed in 18 months, he said. (TN)

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**THE "I'S ARE DOTTED**, the "t"s are crossed and the Providence & Worcester Railroad now has a new logo to mark its entry into the Genesee & Wyoming family of railroads. The Surface Transportation Board granted authority for G&W to buy the Class III railroad on Dec. 15. And G&W executives began further integration on Jan. 3 confirming that the famed New England short line will be part of G&W's North American



**a Genesee & Wyoming Company**

Northeast Region, with headquarters in Rochester, N.Y., and unveiling P&W's new logo on their website.

The logo outlines P&W's original route in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, accented with the railroad's 1844 charter date. P&W's largest presence is in Connecticut and it operates in New York, as well, but the new logo recognizes the railroad's original Providence, R.I.-Worcester, Mass. Route. (TN)

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**THE RAILROAD MUSEUM** of Pennsylvania (Strasburg) is joining forces with the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum and research complex, which includes 19 museums and



galleries and the National Zoological Park. The affiliate program was launched in 1996 to develop long-term collaborative partnerships with other museums and educational and cultural organizations. The RR Museum is the first Smithsonian Affiliate within the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, and the 11th in Pennsylvania. (RP)

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**THE MBTA APPROVED** Jan. 9 further development at its Greenbush Station project. The announced property sale allows a transit-oriented development project at Greenbush Station in Scituate, Mass. to move forward. While the parking area at Greenbush Station to the east of New Driftway is being repurposed for the project, a total of 370 parking spaces are proposed to be preserved with 240 parking spaces preserved specifically for MBTA commuters at the Greenbush Station parking lot. Construction of the project is expected to be accomplished in 16-18 months during one phase with 33 full- and part-time jobs generated. “The MBTA continues to leverage opportunities to advance underutilized property to advance transit-oriented housing and development around its stations,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “As the Commonwealth’s second largest property owner, the MBTA’s pursuit of private sector partnerships promotes public transit, local economic growth, and opportunities for the MBTA to boost non-fare revenue as it aims to control costs and reinvest in the core system.” (RA)

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**FUELED BY THE RETURN** of regular steam and the National Park Service’s centennial, visitation to Steamtown National Historic Site increased by 10 percent in 2016. According to data released this week by the National Park Service, more than 99,000 people visited the park in 2016, up from 89,500 in 2015 and 84,200 people in 2014. (TN)

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**A SHINY RED-AND-SILVER** EMD SD70M-2 is the newest locomotive to be dipped into Vermont Railway System’s livery. The locomotive was released from the railroad’s Rutland shop earlier this month as VTR No. 431. The locomotive will be based out of Rutland and will work to Burlington, Whitehall, New York, Bellows Falls, and North Bennington. Local sources familiar with rail operations say the locomotive will operate primarily between Whitehall and Bellow Falls or Rutland to

North Bennington. VTR No. 431 is the first SD70M-2 to be repainted into Vermont Railway colors since being acquired from Florida East Coast. No. 431 is former FEC No. 101. (TN)



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**A DAY AFTER ANNOUNCING** that it will debut rebuilt 2-6-6-2 No. 1309, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad officials said Thursday they’ll get the job done on time with a little extra help. Diversified Rail Services, a locomotive restoration contractor from Rossville, Ga., will begin working with the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad’s shop crew to complete work on Chesapeake & Ohio No. 1309 by Memorial Day, say Project Manager John Hankey and railroad President Mike Brant. Hankey said that two boilermakers and their assistants are expected to begin installing staybolts Monday, with installation of flues completed by the beginning of March. The next steps will be a hydrostatic test and boiler lagging and jacket. “We expect the first firing in late April-early May. By that time, the cab will be on, but not running boards or domes and other parts. It will sort-of begin to look like a locomotive.” (TN)

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**CHESAPEAKE & OHIO** blue-and-gold will once again haul freight through the Commonwealth of Virginia. CSX Transportation is donating ex-Chesapeake & Ohio SD40 No. 7534 to the C&O Historical Society in Clifton Forge. The locomotive is known most for serving as the last C&O-painted locomotive in active service as CSX SD40 No. 4617. The locomotive was retired from service several years ago after being repainted from C&O into CSX’s similar blue-and-gold ‘YN3’ scheme. Now, the locomotive is being restored to its original paint before headed to Virginia. (TN)

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**THE** Association of American Railroads (AAR) on Jan. 13 responded to comments filed by a group of shippers to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) for new mandated reciprocal switching ("forced access") regulation. The AAR believes this new regulation "would force railroads to turn their traffic over to competitor railroads." In its reply comments, the AAR outlined to the STB how the shipper comments "...do nothing to contradict the conclusion that the Board's proposed reciprocal switching rules are unlawful..." and "...the shippers are using the proposed rule as a means of circumventing existing rate regulation standards." The filing also states: "...The narrow self-interest of certain shippers in a revenue transfer in their favor - based on government intervention that they would never tolerate in their own industries - cannot offset the multiple flaws in the Board's proposal." The AAR contends "the shipper comments underscore the need for the STB to terminate the proceeding and withdraw its forced access proposal because it violates the STB's governing statute, principles of sound economics, and longstanding policy without any coherent rationale." AAR President and CEO Edward R. Hamberger said "forced access is an ill-conceived approach that compromises the efficiency of the entire network. "This proposed regulation represents a sweeping reversal of the market-based approach favored by Congress over the last three-plus decades." (RA)

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**CANADIAN PACIFIC CEO** E. Hunter Harrison may not be retired for long. The operations wizard and turnaround specialist could be headed for a senior position at CSX Transportation as part of an investor-led management shakeup, according to a report in The Wall Street Journal. Harrison tells the newspaper that he's finalizing an agreement with activist investor Paul Hilal, who was a part of the Pershing Square Capital Management team that successfully ousted CP CEO Fred Green and several CP directors after a bitter proxy battle in 2012. "We are close to a deal to potentially look at some opportunities," Harrison told the Journal. Harrison and Hilal — who last year launched his own activist hedge fund — worked together on CP's unsuccessful attempts to acquire Norfolk Southern and CSX over the past two years. CSX Transportation executives say the Florida-based railroad will speak with the firm of an activist

investor linked in news reports to soon-to-be-retired Canadian Pacific CEO E. Hunter Harrison. (TN)

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**A NEW OUTER STATION** will rise on a 2-1/2 acre site near Reading's city limits as the Reading & Northern ramps up its passenger services. The \$2-million project includes a siding off the railroad's main line as well as a station, water tank, and a display locomotive. Andy Muller Jr., CEO of the Reading & Northern, bought adjacent properties along state Route 61 in Muhlenberg Township for \$895,000 in 2016. He tore down a former strip mall and a restaurant on the site, but kept their parking spaces. The site is north of the railroad's connection with Norfolk Southern. A railroad contractor is building the station track. Mueller tells local news media that the site is to include Victorian-style buildings, a water tank, and a display track for No. 225, a former Canadian Pacific 4-6-0 previously owned by the late George M. Hart. (TN)

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**WHEN THE RINGLING BROS.** and Barnum & Bailey circus drops its big top for the last time in May, the classic passenger cars and equipment it moves by rail will return to Florida to face an uncertain future. In a mid-month announcement, managers with Ringling parent company Feld Entertainment say high operating costs and declining ticket sales are forcing them to stop both "Red" and "Blue" tours of the circus in May. The company's Red unit will make its final performance in Providence, R.I., on May 7 and the Blue unit will finish up in Uniondale, N.Y., on May 21. Stephen Payne, vice president of corporate communications at Feld Entertainment, tells *Trains News Wire* that both the Red and Blue trainsets will be deadheaded to Florida at the end of their tours. Payne says a final disposition for the trains and associated equipment has yet to be determined. The Red unit consists of 54 cars: 34 coaches and 20 flat cars. The Blue unit includes 35 coaches and 21 equipment flat cars. Each unit travels independently across North America. The company owns and operates more than 120 railcars and is among the largest passenger car operators in North America. The cars operate under "RBBX" reporting marks. Between 250 and 300 performers and other circus workers travel on each of the two circus trains for more than 40 weeks each year. The circus, which owners have billed the "Greatest Show on Earth,"

has roots in Delevan, Wis., that date to 1875 with a traveling circus headlined by P.T. Barnum; and a separate circus started by Baraboo, Wis.'s Ringling Brothers in 1884. The Ringlings bought Barnum & Bailey in 1907 and officially merged the operations in 1919. The Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wis., displays circus and railroad artifacts from the early years of circus entertainment. On Sunday, Circus World Museum Executive Director Scott O'Donnell fielded a continuous stream of media queries. In an interview, he said the museum would welcome rolling stock from the current circus trains. "This comes as an absolute surprise," he said about the decision to end the show. "It's not only the end of an American institution, it's also the end of an American brand that's been around longer than baseball, and around longer than Coca-Cola. They're all iconic American imagery." (TN)

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**WITH THE CIRCUS WORLD** reeling with the announcement that Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is shutting down, carnival operator Strates Shows plans to not only continue to move its equipment by rail, but is looking for expansion opportunities. The Orlando-based carnival plays about two dozen dates each season in seven eastern states from Florida as far north as New York State and Vermont. Strates Shows dates to 1923. That year James E. Strates, a Greek immigrant who arrived in the United States in 1909, acquired New York's Southern Tier Shows. In 1932, he changed its name to James E. Strates Shows. By 1934, he had purchased the shows first five flatcars along with 17 trucks to carry his equipment. From that season on, Strates purchased flatcars from the Warren Tank Car Company each year. By 1938 he had 25 cars and continued to add to the fleet until he had 40 cars. In 1935, he purchased a private car once owned by millionaire oilman Harry Sinclair. Named *Elizabeth* for his daughter, the car had five staterooms, an observation room, butler's pantry, and bathroom with shower. Strates continued to build and manage the carnival until his death in 1959 when his son, E. James Strates, assumed responsibility for the carnival. Now licensed under Strates Shows Inc., the Strates family continues to own and operate the business. (TN)

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**PASSENGER TRAINS IN THE NETHERLANDS** are set to use the 21st century equivalents of

centuries-old windmill power to move. Nederlandse Spoorwegen, a Dutch passenger railroad company, is partnering with Eneco, a local electricity company, on new wind energy technology. Starting this month, the company's entire fleet of passenger trains will be powered exclusively by wind energy, New Atlas reports. According to a spokesperson for the Dutch railroad company, the railroad uses the same amount of energy as the city of Amsterdam. Newly built wind farms are helping supply additional energy for the railroad and its passenger fleet. Nederlandse Spoorwegen is the primary passenger rail operator in the Netherlands, operating more than 4,000 trains each day across the country's more than 3,200-mile rail system. (TN)

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

### TRAINS

So-long EMD...It Was Great

Climate Change

Improved Service for *Downeaster*

Gallery

### MODEL RAILROADER

### RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Railroad Signals, Part 12

Look Both Ways

Tracklaying

### CLASSIC TRAINS (Winter 2016)

Prosperity Special: Symbol of the 1920s

West Side, East Side

Manhattan in NYC

Erie Lackawanna Reprise

Riding High: Santa Fe's Big Move of 1956

"Hi-Level" *El Capitan* cars

My Summer Cab Rides

News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Amtrak "News", Trains Newswire, Railway Age, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger, National Association of Railroad Passengers.

## **EDITOR'S NOTES**

1. Here we are at the beginning of the 37<sup>th</sup> year of publication of "The Semaphore". Very hard for me to



believe the numbers...almost 400 issues, since Volume 1, number 1, and who knows how many pages of print. And I haven't been fired yet! (Had a few close calls!) Thanks to the many members and friends, who have supported me over the years; couldn't do it without you!

2. "Where do I place **Show Flyers?**" is a common question. How about: supermarkets, convenience stores, barbershops, library, post office, restaurants, your office or place of business, neighbors and friends. Each additional visitor we get to come through the door helps us!

.....*David N. Clinton*

## MEMBER NEWS

Condolences go out to the family of **Jack Bryant**, who passed away on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Many members paid their respects to this wonderful man at the Wake and Memorial Service.

Condolences go to **Chris Barlow** and his family on the death of his mother, Helen, on December 30<sup>th</sup>. Our thoughts and prayers go with you and the many happy memories you have of her, Chris.

Condolences also to **Bill Garvey**, on the death of his brother Steve, who passed away on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Bill. The happy memories will prevail.

Best wishes and hopes for a speedy recovery go out to **Bob Knapp**, who will have replacement hip surgery next Monday. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Bob.

## Birthday Celebrations

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

Bob Farrenkopf ..... February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Jeremy Cahill ..... February 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Don Pierce ..... February 5<sup>th</sup>  
Steve Wintermeier..... February 5<sup>th</sup>  
Roger St. Peter ..... February 6<sup>th</sup>  
Paul Agnew..... February 18<sup>th</sup>  
Martin Melamed ..... February 21<sup>st</sup>  
Ray Welliver (H) ..... February 29<sup>th</sup>

### Running Extra

## Recommendation for new NEC would improve travel times; increase reliability

Mischa Wanek-Libman, editor, [Railway Age](#)

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) unveiled recommendations that would enhance the Northeast Corridor (NEC) over the next three decades; focusing on a state-of-good-repair before projects could be executed to enhance and improve service.

The FRA's vision to build a better and stronger NEC is the result of four years of working with the Northeast states, federal and state partner agencies and "dozens and dozens" of public meetings. "The Department of Transportation believes that investing in this vision for the Northeast Corridor must happen—because rail does more than take us places; it provides us with opportunities and connects us to the future," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "While building this recommendation would require significant investment, the cost of doing nothing is much greater. The communities and the economies of the Northeast cannot grow and flourish without significant, new investment."

Since 2012, the Northeast states and FRA have taken on outreach efforts to engage stakeholders and help guide and develop a vision for the corridor. FRA said what became clear was that the NEC of today does not have the capacity to handle

the demands of tomorrow. FRA made clear that while the recommendation made would grow the role of rail along the Northeast Corridor, it prioritizes bringing the current corridor back to good condition, or a state of good repair, first. With the corridor returned to good condition, the recommendation includes projects that will allow for even faster and more reliable service, along with more options for commuters and travelers. The recommendation is also projected to create 47,000 jobs each year, for 30 years.

FRA's recommendation aim to increase reliability and provide more options by:

- Adding new tracks to increase the Northeast Corridor to four tracks in most locations, which would allow for more frequent and faster service. Additional tracks would be added to areas with greater demand.
- Providing intercity access to Philadelphia Airport so that passengers do not have to change trains at 30th Street.
- Adding direct and frequent service to Hartford, Conn., and Springfield, Mass.
- Increasing, and in some cases doubling, the number of regional trains and providing up to five times more intercity trains.

Additionally, the FRA said the recommendation would improve travel times by shaving 45 minutes off the trip between Boston and New York City and 35 minutes off the time to travel between New York City and Washington, D.C.

FRA says it will now be up to the states, cities and railroads to take the next steps on its recommendation and decide whether to move forward with any specific projects. FRA pointed out that each individual project would require additional review, environmental studies and significant funding. "In order to keep moving forward, we need a new vision for the Northeast Corridor – a corridor that can move an ever-increasing population safer, faster and more reliably than before," said FRA Administrator Sarah E. Feinberg. "We need a

corridor that provides more options and more trains for commuters. One that allows for seamless travel between the nation's capital and New York, and New York and Providence and Boston. A corridor that provides streamlined connections between a city's airports and its city center. And a corridor that can efficiently and reliably serve a population that is growing quickly."



Check out the RDCs between the locomotives and the passenger cars!

(Boston Globe 12/23/16) :

## Bumper in rail crash was century old

HOBOKEN, N.J. — When a New Jersey Transit commuter train plowed off the end of a track in September, killing a woman standing in the Hoboken station and injuring more than 100 others, the last thing in its way was a concrete-and-steel bumper that was in place when the station opened in 1907.

Experts say more modern bumpers equipped with hydraulic shock absorbers and sled-like friction shoes — like those installed more than 25 years ago at NJ Transit's Atlantic City terminal — would not have been able to stop the train, which was traveling at 21 miles per hour, but might have slowed it enough to lessen the damage.

Federal investigators are examining the role the aging bumper played in the Hoboken crash and whether other barriers could have made a difference.

For now, however, all but one of the tracks in the almost 110-year-old station that serves about 15,000 passen-

gers a day still have the old-style, stationary bumpers at the end of the tracks, just a few feet from the busy terminal.

NJ Transit is in the process of hiring a consultant to review the bumping posts at Hoboken as part of an overall safety review of the terminal, Steven Santoro, NJ Transit's recently named executive director, said.

The bumpers in Hoboken don't feature hydraulics and aren't equipped with friction shoes. A bumping post with friction shoes would have to be placed farther away from the track's end and would effectively reduce the platform length, Santoro said. That, he said, would force NJ Transit to run trains "at least" one car shorter, which would potentially cause overcrowding.

NJ Transit has embarked on a project to construct three longer platforms at Hoboken as part of post-Hurricane Sandy flood mitigation, but that isn't expected to be finished until 2020, Santoro said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

## Amidst concerns, optimism for 2017

Frank N. Wilner, Contributing Editor, [Railway Age](#)

When Herbert Hoover was President and Republicans controlled the White House and both congressional chambers, there was produced the 1930 Smoot-Hawley tariff boosting import duties to record levels, sparking a global trade war and contributing to the depth and length of the Great Depression.

Welcome 2017, when Republicans again control the executive and legislative branches and are cozying to President-elect Trump's retrenchment from globalism.

U.S. railroads can ill-afford a collapse in world trade—already weakening for two years—on top of coal's decline owing to generation plant retirements, low natural gas prices and environmental regulations (whose scrapping will not counter adverse market economics). Dreaded also are foreign buyers shopping elsewhere, should the U.S. withdraw from international climate accords. Even crude oil by rail faces headwinds over safety concerns and more pipelines.

Yet there are reasons for railroad optimism—infrastructure investment, tax reform, regulatory rollbacks and a defanging of labor by the Trump Administration.

Amtrak, however—but not private sector entrants to the passenger market—is the cooked holiday goose and may be sold to Yankee Candle Co. for a new fragrance, Burned Money. Why? Consider two Trump transportation team advisers—Shirley Ybarra, formerly associated with the libertarian Reason Foundation, which characterizes Amtrak as “a failed national experiment”; and retired Heritage Foundation economist Ron Utt, among whose favorite piñatas was Amtrak public subsidies.

Ybarra is warm to the concept of private-sector competition on Amtrak state-supported and long-distance routes. There also is emerging bipartisan interest in AIRNet-21's bid to lease, maintain, renew and dispatch, through a public-private partnership, the Northeast Corridor, while opening it to competition by private-sector operators.

Congressional leadership should remain unaltered. However, Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) succeeds retiring Harry Reid (D-Nev.) as Senate Minority Leader—significant because Schumer and Trump, different in so many ways, notwithstanding both being New Yorkers, are conjoined in support of increased infrastructure spending.

Improbable as that relationship seems, history records that two other improbably linked politicians, former House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bud Shuster (R-Pa.), the current chairman's father, and the then-senior committee Democrat, the late Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), found just such middle ground in crafting multimodal transportation bills.

Additionally, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) favors infrastructure spending that Republicans rejected with Obama in the White House—the difference being a Republican linkage to tax reform and tax credits. Expect Democrats, out of political necessity, to climb aboard with Schumer in the lead.

While most railroads pay considerably lower effective tax rates than the 35% statutory rate, tax reform is an agenda item that could spawn new public-private partnerships to double- or triple-track main lines, accelerate short line capital spending and construct improved highways linking ports and expanded rail intermodal terminals.



Most crucial to railroads are regulatory decisions of the five-member Surface Transportation Board, where Trump will name a permanent Republican chairman and nominate at least two new Republicans to unfilled seats created by the 2015 STB Reauthorization Act.

With Norfolk Southern Vice President Robert Martinez on the Trump transportation transition team advising on STB nominees, railroads are in the catbird seat, suggesting the captive shipper agenda has gone from improbable to impossible. The Republican majority will decide on captive shipper petitions for open access, and if to revise the Stand Alone Cost (SAC) test and the formula for determining revenue adequacy.

Expect a new Federal Railroad Administrator with a solid rail safety background, supportive of public-private partnerships, less demanding on installation of Positive Train Control, skeptical of electronically controlled pneumatic (ECP) brakes, and open to one-person train crews.

At the National Mediation Board, the terms of the two Democrats and one Republican have expired. Republican Nicolas Geale, who previously worked with Republican Labor Secretary (and Trump DOT Secretary nominee) Elaine Chao, wife of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), is ripe for a bump-up elsewhere, allowing Trump (with airline and railroad input) to name two new Republicans and a new Democrat. Rail labor, engaged in national wage negotiations, should fear a Trump-named Presidential Emergency Board should contract talks break down.

EDITED FROM *TRAINS NEWS WIRE*, NOVEMBER 28, 2016

## Maine museum plans 'to stay the course' despite ballot setback

By Wayne Laepple

GRAY, Maine — Officials with a Maine narrow gauge museum say they're hopeful about their future despite a ballot proposal defeat early this month that would have helped them relocate with taxpayer support.

Municipalities across the country approved about half of all rail-related, mostly transit, proposals put before them on Election Day. In Gray, a ballot proposal would have given nearly half a million dollars to the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad and Museum to help it make a move from Portland, Maine, to Gray. The measure lost with about 60 percent of the 4,700 voters casting "no" ballots.

"It was clearly disappointing, but we're going to stay the course," Donnell Carroll, Maine Narrow Gauge executive director tells *Trains News Wire*. "The vote created a lot of buzz, a lot of great publicity."

Carroll says Gray residents liked the project but not with taxpayers as the funding source. Funds would have come from the

town's cash reserve and would not have directly affected daily operations. But most of those who opposed it said they didn't want the funds to go to a private organization, even if it is a non-profit.

Maine Narrow Gauge's board will meet with property owners in Portland soon to explore extending the current lease on the site, which is now set to end in February 2017.

"We have a good relationship with them," Carroll says of the property owners. "We'd like to stay here through 2017."

Connell told local newspapers that the museum still plans to move to Gray, but it will have to reduce the scale of its project. The original project was estimated to cost \$4 to \$6 million. Fund-raising efforts have been slow, with officials saying they've raised fewer than \$500,000 since the move was announced in 2014. Connell says the effort to move the museum would continue.

*[Contributed by Barry Steinberg]*