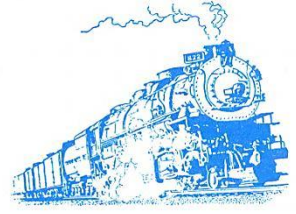


# The Semaphore

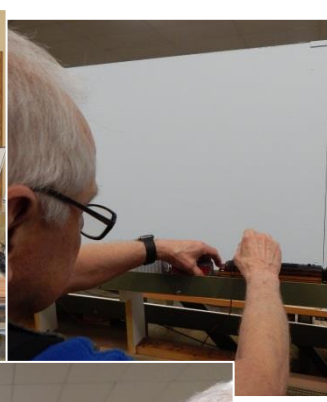
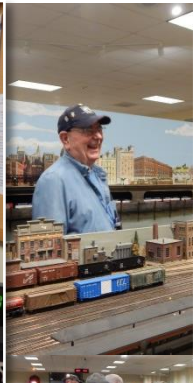
South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



**MARCH 26, 2018** ■■■■■■■■■■■■ **VOLUME 38** ■■■■■■■■■■■■ **NUMBER 3**



# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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Cape Cod News.....	Skip Burton
Boston <u>Herald</u> Reporter.....	Jim South
Boston Globe & <u>Wall Street Journal</u> Reporters	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
Empire State News.....	Dick Kozlowski
Amtrak News.....	Rick Sutton
“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. ©2018  
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VOLUME 38 ■■■■ NUMBER 3 ■■■■ MARCH 2018

### CLUB OFFICERS

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Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('18)
	Bryan Miller ('18)
	Roger St. Peter ('19)
	Rick Sutton ('19)

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**ON THE COVER:** This month’s Show and Open House. Photos by Joe Dumas.

# FORM 19 ORDERS

## MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> 8 p.m.

## DECODER/ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## “TRAINS ‘N TAXES”

Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, starting at 11 a.m.

## APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>

## APRIL B.O.D.

Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

## CONTESTS

Congratulations to Skip Burton on winning this month's 50/50 Raffle!

**FOR May**, to celebrate Amtrak's 47<sup>th</sup> birthday, we will have the traditional Beech Grove Shops cake and prizes will be related to Amtrak. Question: **What airline did Amtrak's present CEO and president come from and what is his name?** Any paper works or answer forms on top of old wood display case in the train room. Don't forget your name and good luck!

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

EXCELLENT! The work that was done to ready the railroad and the club for the show. The railroad had not had a good cleaning in over a year and in that time the ceiling has been opened at least two times to pull cables for security cameras and the new internet system. Every time a ceiling tile is moved we get particles of insulation and dirt coming down on the railroad along with the natural-occurring dust, so it was time to give it a good cleaning and that is what it got. The Scenery Committee cleaned every part of the scenery; the colors came back to the scenery when the dust was removed. The Trackwork Committee



repaired several turnouts that were causing problems and the entire track was cleaned, which was made easier because most equipment had been removed from the railroad as requested. And the new Larson Branch was finished. The Electrical Committee found some problems and repaired them before the show. The resident cleaning person, Hazel, vacuumed the entire floor around the railroad as well as the regular cleaning he does for the club. I don't have every name that helped, but a big THANK YOU to all of you for helping out and doing such a good job.

The railroad performed well for the show. There weren't any electrical or track problems--which could be a first. The only problems were either equipment or human errors, I guess we can't fix everything. Equipment should be tested and adjustments made before the show. The new system of assigning tracks seemed to work well, there were a couple small issues but they were resolved quickly. Comments from members were positive and I am glad we were allowed to try it.

Going forward, Scenery work will continue in Cedar Hill. Trackwork is being done for the Trolley Committee. Roadbed has been made by the Benchwork Committee, so work on the new staging yard will begin shortly. The Narrow Gauge Committee will be working on upgrading track and turnouts in their yard area.

That is it for this month, would be glad to hear your comments or questions.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

## SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

### MARCH 2013 (5 years ago)

- Gov. Patrick proposes \$850 million expansion of Boston's South Station.
- Track and signal up-grades on the New England Central result in increased speeds for Amtrak *Vermont* to St. Albans.
- UP and Southern California Chapter of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society working to find a suitable "Big Boy" for restoration to operation.
- MBTA seeking proposals to provide WiFi service on commuter rail and at stations.

- BNSF to test LNG-powered locomotives.
- Waterville, ME, looking for proposals to build roof over MEC steam loco #470, to display it in a “museum-type” setting.
- Study finds that passenger rail service between Maine’s two most populated areas, Portland and Lewiston-Auburn, would cost \$138 million.
- First New England Central diesel painted into Genesee & Wyoming “family” paint scheme.
- Cedar Hill has 5 tracks available for staging, along with “Classification Yard A”.
- Scenery being installed in Richmond Mills area.

**MARCH 2008** (10 years ago)

- NY-NJ Port Authority Trans-Hudson celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Nicknamed “The Tubes”.
- MBTA looking to extend Haverhill Commuter line to Plaistow, NH, with new layover station north of Haverhill, instead of the present Bradford station.
- UP building “Golden Spike Observation Tower” in the world’s largest freight yard, North Platte, Nebraska.
- British hedge fund tries to take over CSX.
- 100-ft wind turbine built to power new Saco, ME, railroad station.
- Cape Cod Central takes delivery of new “Energy Train” loco and trash car.
- Massive work going on in Bare Cove Park, creating new DPW headquarters/garage and ball fields.

**MARCH 2003** (15 years ago)

- P1K introduces first decent Alco RS2.
- MBTA agrees to “whistle ban” for Greenbush Line.
- Amtrak puts “Acela” name only on *Acela Express* trains; no longer using on Regional trains.
- Jon Delli Priscoli buys out other two partners of Edaville RR.
- CSX relocates corporate headquarters to Jacksonville, FL, from Richmond, VA.
- Port Authority of NY and NJ to spend \$125 million rebuilding ferry slips at Hoboken Terminal for restoration of ferry service to Manhattan.
- Cog Railway announces change from coal to heating oil for their steam locos. (never happened)
- Peter Palica re-joins SSMRC.
- Fred Alexander (D) becomes member or SSMRC.

**MARCH 1998** (20 Years Ago)

- Conrail sells Business Train.
- Conway Scenic acquires ex-GN dome car from Cape Cod RR.
- Amtrak approves design of new high-speed train and names it “American Flyer”.
- Ex-Green Mtn., ex-Rutland RS1 #400 donated to Danbury Railway Museum and painted NH #0763.
- GE rolls out 1000<sup>th</sup> locomotive.
- Worcester Union Station rehab project receives \$39 million.
- Design work begins on new Mansfield, MA, station, replacing “temporary” 50-year-old structure.
- UP in middle of “service problems”, after acquiring Southern Pacific.

- Amtrak receives approval to use Talgo trains from Spain in Pacific Northwest service.
- Last Operations in old “South Division”, which was scrapped after the Spring Show.

**MARCH 1993** (25 Years Ago)

- New CN president, Paul Tellier, cuts 3,000 jobs, considers selling Central Vermont subsidiary and talks about privatizing in five years.
- Conrail takes delivery of first locos with “ditch lights”, the SD60M.
- Amtrak awards contract to Bethlehem Steel for eight 800-ft, high-speed crossovers for the Northeast Corridor.
- Maine and Canadian officials fight CP Rail’s proposed abandonment of 375-mile mainline from Sherbrook, Quebec, across northern Maine to Saint John, New Brunswick.

**MARCH 1988** (30 Years Ago)

- SSMRC holds “50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show”.
- Cog Railway begins spring ski runs, allowing skiers to “do” Tuckerman’s Ravine.
- Conrail considers selling Beacon Park and moving to Westborough.
- Amtrak’s *Montrealer*, using Guilford tracks, in jeopardy of being discontinued.
- Lionel develops “Rail Scope” video camera inside model locomotive.
- Amherst Railway Society one-day show in one building; 13,000 people attend.
- Metro North Commuter Rail Road awards contract to rebuild 10 ex-NH FL9 locos.
- Last rails removed from Commercial Street in Portland, Maine—the former Portland Terminal RR.
- “Willey Section House” in Crawford Notch purposely burned, due to heavy vandalism.
- Presidential candidate Jesse Jackson makes “Whistle-stop tour” on Winnepesaukee RR special from Concord to Plymouth, NH.
- President Reagan again proposes Zero funding for Amtrak.
- Virginia, last state to require cabooses, repeals law.

**MARCH 1983** (35 Years Ago)

- WBZ’s “Evening Magazine” cameraman spends 10-hours at Club shooting for future 5-minute segment.
- Trolley committee achieves having trolley make complete loop in North Division without assistance.
- CNR puts CV up for sale; not sold.
- \$10 million for rehabilitation of tracks from Attleboro to Hyannis for restoration of Cape Cod Amtrak service.
- Only E-units purchased by a Canadian RR (3 CPR E8s) retired by VIA Rail Canada.
- “ACE 3000” project, using steam locomotive, begins testing in West Virginia.
- NJ Transit takes delivery of eight ex-Pennsy E44 electrics.
- MEC and B&M start new intermodal piggyback train called “East Wind”, between Bangor and New Haven, CT.
- Agreement reached on restoration of Washington, D.C. Union Station to original transportation purpose.

## DCC & ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

This month was geared to installing the interiors in the new Rapido Parlor cars, but only two members showed up for that project.

**Rick Pearson** was one of them and was first in and raring to go. The Parlors come apart real easy, after the couplers are removed. **Paul Cutler III** also participated in this fun time, giving Rick and Ye Ed some “tips “on installing the bulkheads, like removing the heavy coat of paint on the bottom edges to make them glue better. Gluing the chairs in at different directions made it much more realistic and let the passengers look out the windows, instead of towards the center of the car, as the factory-installed interiors do. The light bar and capacitor are installed last. With the power wires from the trucks JUST long enough, the tip from Paul about bending the ends of the wires at 90°, putting a blob of solder on top of the four contacts, and then slipping the end of the wire into the blob, once it was melted, was very helpful. Rick was pleased with his car and now all he needs are some passengers to enjoy the ride!

Former member **Ross Hall**, now living on the Cape, was invited to install a decoder in his second B&M E-7 from Model Power; he had done the first one at last month’s clinic. The DH126 has to be hard-wired in and the factory 16v bulb can be used without resistor. The important things to remember, especially with older models, are to test them first on DC, to make sure they run. Then, remove ALL wires from the motor, as the decoder has to go in “series” with the motor and power pickups.

Newest applicant **David Galbraith** brought a Bachmann 2-6-0 that his grandson uses on their home layout. It had factory sound, which suddenly stopped working. After removing the tender body, and checking the speaker for resistance, it was determined that the speaker was “blown”. The locomotive still worked fine.

**Al Munn** brought one of his Atlas GP7s in the handsome Bangor & Aroostook red/grey/white paint. He replaced a decoder that he had installed in the early 2000s, with a DH165AO. He also upgraded the lighting to L.E.D.s, which were quite an improvement.

**Paul Agnew** worked on his W&R brass I-5 New Haven loco. He had installed “Wow Sound” from TCS, and was making some adjustments with the CVs. He also installed the DH123 into an Athearn R-T-R SD45T “Tunnel Motor” dressed in Cotton Belt “Bicentennial” scheme. Most of the Athearn R-T-Rs now come with a 9-pin plug that easily accepts the DigitraxDH126 and DH166 decoders. Fun to have these special paint job units around! Maybe your favorite RR had one in the mid-70s?

Our next clinic will be **Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. Everyone is welcome!



**A 77-YEAR OLD** Electro-Motive Division SW1 is in route to the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum in far western Massachusetts, saved at the last minute from the scrappers. The locomotive, originally Boston & Maine No. 1113, is one of several B&M SW1s to survive. Now painted bright yellow with the number 1849, the unit served for nearly 60 years switching hopper cars of coal at the Mount Tom Station power plant at Holyoke.



Owner First Light closed the facility in 2014 and demolition began in 2017. Berkshire Scenic negotiated the sale of the unit from salvage company Environmental Remediation Services Inc. With assistance from former Mount Tom workers, the museum was able to acquire the 600-hp, 99-ton unit, which has had only minor modifications in the past seven decades. It was last used in 2014, and museum personnel learned the locomotive had received substantial mechanical work at Pan Am Railways' East Deerfield shops shortly before the power plant closed. The unit needs only new

batteries and a bell, to replace the original one stolen after the plant closed, to be ready to go. The museum is accepting donations for the initial phase of the locomotive's rehabilitation and operation. To give via PayPal, go to [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com). For more information on the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum, go to [www.berkshirescenicrailroad.org](http://www.berkshirescenicrailroad.org).

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**STATE SUPPORT** for VIA Rail's Fleet Renewal Program was confirmed on February 27 with the publication of the Canadian government's 2018 budget, which allocates funds to Transport Canada for the procurement of new trains for the Windsor - Quebec City corridor. The budget does not disclose the total value of the funding commitment due to the imminent launch of the procurement process. VIA Rail now plans to issue a request for proposals through the Merx Canadian Public Tenders portal. The operator says it is seeking 32 push-pull trainsets to provide a total of 9100 seats. These will replace the current locomotive-hauled trains on Via Rail's flagship route from 2022 onwards. The new diesel trains will be compliant with the latest US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Tier 4 emissions standards. The budget also allocates a further \$C 8m (\$US 6.2m) for the "continued in-depth assessment" of Via Rail's high-frequency rail proposal for the Toronto - Montreal - Quebec City corridor. (RA)

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**AN ILLINOIS-BUILT EMD AEM-7** is destined for the Illinois Railway Museum's collection. A source close to the museum confirms the addition of motor No. 945. EMD built 54 AEM-7s for Amtrak at its LaGrange plant in the late 1970s and early 1980s. No. 945 was outshopped in 1982. It was not one of the 29 AEM-7s converted to AC traction motors in 2000-2002. At 11kV 25 Hz and 25kV 60 Hz AC operating voltages, the locomotive is not compatible with the museum's 600 volt DC overhead system without rewiring. In June 2016, Amtrak ran an AEM-7 farewell excursion from Washington Union Station to Wilmington, Del., and return with Nos. 942 and 946 doing the honors. No. 915 is already preserved at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg. (TN)

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**AN EXTENSION OF AMTRAK** *Downeaster* service in Maine moved has moved a step closer to a limited trial this summer. The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority voted on Monday to approve a three-weekend trial in August of an extension of the *Downeaster* from Brunswick to Rockland, a distance of just more than 50 miles,

with intermediate stops in Bath, Wiscasset, and Newcastle. The extension was originally planned for 10 weeks but was trimmed because of funding limits, the Bangor Daily News reported. The plan now goes to the Maine Department of Transportation, which approves the rail authority budget and owns the Brunswick-Rockland line, for final approval. (TN)

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**AMTRAK HAS ENDED** its 10 percent discounts for members of the American Automobile Association and students with school or college/university ID cards. The passenger carrier quietly pulled these discounts from its online booking portal effective Feb. 18. These changes join [increased penalties for cash refunds](#) on certain types of reservations, including sleeping car reservations that were announced in December and took effect in late January. (TN)

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**UNION PACIFIC'S RESTORATION** of Big Boy No. 4014 enters yet another phase in coming days as the steam shop crew in Cheyenne, Wyo., plans to lift the boiler and roll out the 4-8-8-4's trailing truck for inspection and repairs, UP steam Chief Ed Dickens told an audience Saturday at the train show here. With work on the front engine largely done, the steam crew is turning its attention to the rear half of the locomotive, Dickens, senior manager of heritage operations, said during his annual presentation at the Rocky Mountain Train Show. The lift will be Sunday or Monday. The aim is not just to get the locomotive running in 2019 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike, but to do the highest quality restoration possible, manufacturing new parts in many cases instead of restoring old parts that could fail on the road. Piping under the boiler that is inaccessible when the engine is complete is being replaced, he said. To make its 2019 target, the shop has also outsourced work, turning to Pennsylvania's Strasburg Rail Road for driver tire and pin work and minor use of a shop in Denver. There's also been work on the highly visible front end with work on the pilot and air pump shields. UP began its quest to restore No. 4014 in 2013 when the railroad reached an agreement with Rail Giants Museum in Los Angeles to retrieve the locomotive. No. 4014 is one of eight preserved Big Boys from a fleet of 25 that operated primarily in Wyoming and Utah between 1941 and 1959. When restored, No. 4014 will be the first of her kind to turn a wheel under her own power in 60 years and the

largest operating steam locomotive in the world. (TN)

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**THE HISTORIC** train depot in Yarmouth, ME, is up for sale for \$165,000. The ex-Grand Trunk depot was built in 1906. The building is part of the Protect and Sell Program at Maine Preservation, which connects sellers with buyers, who want to rehabilitate historic properties. Maine Preservation says it will hold easements on the property, and it will be able to protect the building from demolition. The non-profit says the easements will still allow for functional renovations and Maine Preservation will offer assistance in renovation planning. (BG)

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**THE U.S. D.O.T.** will award a significant grant to maintain the route of Amtrak's *Southwest Chief*. The department announced it will be providing a \$16 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant to Colfax County, N.M., according to an announcement made by U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.). The money will be matched with up to \$9.2 million of funds pledged by Amtrak (\$3 million), BNSF Railway (\$3 million), plus the states of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico (\$1 million each), 17 cities and counties along the *Southwest Chief* route, the Colorado Rail Passenger Association, and the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners, Inc. According to the application, the nearly \$25 million raised by the federal grant and coalition partner match will be used to "install 24,000 new ties in the 200 miles between Lamy, N.M., and Trinidad, Colo., to preserve the integrity of the line and keep train speeds at their current levels." Work will also include replacement of the final 17-mile segment of legacy Santa Fe Railway semaphore signaling, "restoring passing sidings and culverts, and addressing rock slide issues at Devils Throne." The route west of Trinidad has been without any regular BNSF Railway freight traffic since 2008. (TN)

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**THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED Rail Authority** on March 9 announced that the line connecting Los Angeles to San Francisco would now cost \$77.3 billion—and as much as \$98.1 billion—from estimates two years ago. The first trains won't operate between San Francisco and Bakersfield until 2029 at the earliest, and the full system would not begin operating until 2033. The new estimates were part of a draft 114-page business plan issued by the rail authority ahead of public hearings and formal submission to the State Legislature in about

60 days. In the original business plan, the authority said it had only enough money in the bank to build an initial operating system, counting on private investment to fund completion of the system. The funding gap at that time was \$40 billion, which is certain to rise under the new estimates. (RA)

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**PIKES PEAK COG RAILWAY'S** operator says there is a chance that the famed rack railroad of the Rockies will close for good. Jack Damioli, president and CEO of The Broadmoor hotel, which owns the 8.9-mile rail line, tells the Colorado Springs Gazette that after months of winter maintenance the railroad could remain closed for up to another three years while the hotel studies its future. At that point, Broadmoor leadership would either close the railroad permanently or rebuild it, which could take "tens of millions of dollars" the newspaper quotes Damioli as saying. During the winter maintenance, railroaders review the condition of the equipment and track and determined that it had reached the end of its useful life, the newspaper reports. The Pikes Peak opened as the Manitou & Pikes Peak Railroad in 1891 with Baldwin-built steam locomotives. It is the highest rail line in North America and, for most of its history, has ferried passengers to the top of Pike's Peak — the mountain — from Manitou Springs, Colo., at the base. (TN)

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**AMTRAK IS PLANNING** to return its service between New York City and Albany-Rensselaer to Grand Central Terminal this summer, which could mean a return to action for stored FL-9 locomotives. That was the word from Amtrak's Empire District general superintendent, Kevin Chittenden, to Saturday's meeting of the Empire State Passengers Association, the Albany Times-Union reports. Chittenden told the meeting the double-track Empire Connector between Metro-North and Penn Station will be closed for maintenance work for three months this summer. He also said the railroad is looking for FL-9s to lease or borrow because they have a nose door that allows an engineer an escape route on two of the four tracks into Grand Central, which do not have enough clearance in tunnels to allow the use of side doors on current locomotives. Use of a cab car, with the locomotive pushing at the rear of the train, is also a possibility. (TN)

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**CONNECTICUT DOT'S** "CTrail Hartford Line" commuter service took a big step forward in early March, operating its first crew familiarization train

over the length of the 62-mile route between New Haven and Springfield, Mass. Contract provider TransitAmerica Services, along with line owner Amtrak, will begin running 34 daily trains over the line Monday through Friday in May. (TN)

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**THE NEW ENGLAND STEAM** Corp., a nonprofit group restoring the last operating Maine Central steam locomotive, is trying to raise \$100,000 to rebuild the tender. The group is spearheading the restoration of MEC 4-6-2 No. 470 at a newly-built shop at Washington Junction, located near Ellsworth. No. 470 gained notoriety in New England railroading when it led a farewell to steam excursion in June 1954. The locomotive was later put on display in Waterville, where the MEC maintained a large shop facility, and it stayed there until nonprofit purchased the locomotive in 2015 and moved it. Since then the group has focused on building a shelter for No. 470 where it can be protected and restored. "Now that the restoration facility is nearly built, we can finally start focusing on the major restoration," board member Peter Violette says. "Because the locomotive can't run without the tender we need to get that done first." Officials say while the original frame and tender trucks can be rebuilt, the tender tank must be built new. Original hardware, including coal bunker doors, the stoker motor, grab irons, steps, and ladder, will all be incorporated in the new body. The main body of the tender will be built locally in Maine. To contribute, go to [www.newenglandsteam.org/donate](http://www.newenglandsteam.org/donate), or write to England Steam Corp., P.O. Box 302, Winterport, Maine 04496. If a check is mailed, please indicate it is for the tender rebuild. (TN)

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**UNION PACIFIC HAS GROUNDED** drones it was using to watch employees, a new practice that has angered employees and union bosses. UP began using drones at 14 different rail yards in December 2017 to monitor employees and ensure they're not violating work rules, like getting on and off moving equipment. "We are finding drones are valuable tools that can help us reach our ultimate goal of operating in an incident-free environment and ensure employees go home safely," UP representative Raquel Espinoza tells the Wall Street Journal. But railroaders on the ground say the unidentified drones are a distraction and union officials are worried the drones will be used as a way to penalize and punish employees for breaking the rules. UP grounded the surveillance drones earlier this month and has agreed to sit down with union officials to discuss the new program. UP has

more than 125 employees qualified to fly drones. In the last few years, drones have become a popular way for Class I railroads to inspect track and bridges, but



this is believed to be the first time that any railroad has used the technology to watch employees. (TN)

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**GENESEE & WYOMING** Inc. Chairman, President and CEO John C. "Jack" Hellmann, is the 55th recipient of Railway Age's Railroader of the Year Award. Hellmann, 47, is leader of the world's largest short line and regional railroad holding company, with 122 properties in five countries operating more than 15,000 miles of rail lines. He is among the industry's youngest chief executives. Yet, he is a long-time railroader, with international experience as well as expertise in finance and business development. Hellmann oversees a growing company that in recent years has invested more than \$2 billion in acquisitions and operating agreements. He has also been expanding the company into related transportation markets. (RA)

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**UNION PACIFIC IS PULLING HUNDREDS** of locomotives out of storage, calling back furloughed crews, stepping up hiring, and adding yard and local jobs to improve service and reduce congestion across the system. "As you likely know, our network is experiencing service challenges. We fully understand Union Pacific is an integral part of your supply chain, and we want you to know we are working hard to resolve these issues," Chief Marketing Officer Beth Whited wrote in a March 15 update to customers. A host of factors — bad weather, computer system updates, operating plan changes, and a glitchy rollout of positive train control — has combined to slow UP's average train speed and increase terminal dwell. And that has boosted the number of cars online, which further adds to the congestion. UP's velocity fell 5 percent in the fourth quarter, declined 2 percent in January, and was down 4 percent in February. Terminal dwell, meanwhile, was up 12 percent in the fourth quarter, rose 7 percent in January, and increased 8 percent in February. (TN)

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**THE BOOTHBAY RAILWAY VILLAGE** is raising funds to complete the restoration of S.D. Warren 0-4-0T No. 2, a survivor from one of Maine's lesser known 2-foot gauge railroads. If everything goes



according to plan, the locomotive could run sometime this year on the museum's three-quarter-mile loop of track near Boothbay Harbor. While many enthusiasts have heard of Maine's five famous 2-foot gauge common-carrier roads, fewer know about the industrial railroad built to serve the S.D. Warren Paper Mill Company in Westbrook, just west of Portland. Originally using horse-drawn cars on narrow gauge rails, the paper company purchased three 0-4-0T locomotives in 1895 from the Baldwin Locomotive Works to move materials around the plant. The locomotives were used by the paper mill until the 1940s. When the locomotives were retired from the mill, a man named Frank Van Walsh purchased two of the locomotives, Nos. 1 and 2, and moved them to an amusement park in New Jersey. In 1969, Van Walsh donated the locomotives to the newly formed Boothbay Railway Village. Locomotive No. 1 was put on display with equipment from other Maine 2-footers, including boxcars from the Wiscasset & Quebec Railroad and Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad. Locomotive No. 2 was parked along the highway under the sign that welcomed visitors to the museum. In 2007, volunteers at the museum moved No. 2 inside its shop to evaluate for a possible restoration, which began in earnest in 2016, according to Executive Director Margaret Hoffman. Since then the boiler, frame, and most of the running gear has been rebuilt. All that remains is construction of a new cab and installation of valve gear, plumbing and the throttle. (TN)

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**CANADA'S FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** will help fund replacement of VIA Rail locomotives and rolling stock on the country's most heavily-traveled passenger rail corridor. Separately, Transport Canada will also kick in seed money for planning of high-frequency operations in the Quebec City-Toronto Corridor. Minister of Transport Marc Garneau on Monday announced that Ottawa will provide funding for VIA Rail to replace its fleet in the Quebec City-Windsor Corridor, which accounts for 94% of the operator's ridership, with 32 new, bi-directional trains. "As it is reaching the end of its useful life, the fleet in this corridor must be replaced to help maintain passenger safety for the next 30 years," TC said. The new fleet will be more fuel efficient, reducing harmful emissions by as much as 85%. Other benefits include visual communication media for hearing-impaired passengers; purpose-built accessible washrooms; on-board wheelchair lift, and a minimum of three wheelchair tie-downs per train, with two in the same car, an increase

from the current one tie-down per train. The new fleet will increase VIA Rail's operational flexibility and reliability by reducing mechanical breakdowns that effect on-time-performance. VIA Rail will soon launch a request for qualifications followed by a request for proposals. (RA)

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**FEDERAL REGULATORS** are becoming increasingly concerned about the widespread deterioration in railroad service metrics amid complaints from shipper groups, who say the industry is mired in a slowdown that is delaying shipments of goods from automobiles to grain. The Surface Transportation Board has asked Class I railroad chief executives to explain service problems, whether their railroads have the resources to meet current demand, and to outline their operational outlooks for the rest of the year. The board's request to the seven CEOs, made public on Monday, came in response to letters from grain shippers and automakers that painted a picture of slow and erratic service across North America. Randall Gordon, president of the National Grain and Feed Association, blames the service problems on the industry's cost-cutting in pursuit of lower operating ratios that please Wall Street and investors. "This, in turn, has resulted in the systemic shedding of resources by Class I carriers, including locomotives and crews, that has degraded service to unacceptable levels, and resulted in virtually non-existent surge capacity to meet rail customers' needs," Gordon wrote to the STB. The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers said some assembly plants have run out of room to store new cars due to railroad delays in pulling loaded auto racks and delivering empties. "Alliance members have met with each of the Class I railroads to discern the causes of these service declines and what remedial actions the railroads are taking. Those meetings have largely been unsatisfactory," Dave Schwieter, the association's executive vice president, wrote to the STB. "The responses have varied widely, including IT issues, network changes, weather, and positive train control implementation. Alliance members have not perceived even the semblance of a concerted plan or timeframe to restore effective car service for transporting finished vehicles." The STB noted that service appears to be deteriorating at most of the Class I systems, based on declines in average train speed and climbing average terminal dwell times. Other key metrics, such as the number of freight cars online and the number of cars that have not

moved in 48 hours, are trending in the wrong direction, the STB wrote. (TN) Sad-Ed.

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**CANADIAN NATIONAL** is adding the crews, power, and capacity projects that will help it improve service this year, interim CEO Jean-Jacques Ruest tells U.S. federal regulators. "You have my personal commitment that we are acquiring the equipment, hiring the people, building the track infrastructure, and continuing to invest in technology to be well-positioned for 2018 and beyond," Ruest wrote to the Surface Transportation Board in a letter posted on the board's website on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. CN was the first railroad to respond to the board's request for information about service levels in light of deteriorating performance metrics at most of the Class I railroads in North America. (TN)

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**FORD MOTOR CO.** is exploring ways to become a major presence in Corktown, including possibly acquiring the Michigan Central Depot, The Detroit News has learned. A deal to involve Ford in the historic Detroit neighborhood is being negotiated, multiple sources with knowledge of the situation said Monday. But a transaction is not imminent, two sources said. The automaker has been looking into growing its presence in Corktown since it announced in December it would move its electric- and autonomous-vehicle teams to a renovated building near the old Tiger Stadium site. The potential move to the long-vacant train station would simultaneously resurrect the most visible symbol of Detroit's decline, and make the 114-year-



old automaker a major player in the city's rebirth. The automaker would locate more future-focused segments of the business in the train station, such as data and analytics teams, or those working on

electrification and autonomous vehicles. It already plans to move a 225-person "Team Edison" into a recently redeveloped warehouse in Corktown office space in May. The historic neighborhood has rebounded in the past decade to be one Detroit's most desirable neighborhoods. Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford Jr. has publicly pushed the company's interest in establishing a bigger presence in Corktown, formerly the center of Irish life in the city. The Ford family has roots in County Cork, Ireland, where founder Henry Ford's father was born. The impressive Michigan Central RR station, with a two-story entrance and 16-story office building, was dedicated on January 4, 1914. Its main waiting room was 230 feet long by 95 feet wide, with an arched ceiling roughly five stories high. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. (TDN)

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**TO HELP** with growing business, Massachusetts short line Grafton & Upton has purchased three EMD MP15ACs from CSX. For the past year, the 17-mile RR has relied solely on a leased former Milwaukee Road GATX MP15AC, which has worked well. Until the arrival of the lease unit, G&U had attracted locomotive enthusiasts' attention by relying on a roster of elderly EMDs, including GP7U, GP9, GP9R, CF7 and F7 models. (TN)

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**AMTRAK HAS BEEN COLLECTING** data on the duration and causes of delay to its trains since at least 2009 and has been publishing this data in monthly reports since then, as required by the 2008 passenger rail authorization law. But last Tuesday marked the first time the passenger carrier has given each of its Class I host railroads a letter grade based on the number of minutes of host-caused delay per 10,000 train miles. Amtrak's "Host Railroad Report Card & FAQ" gives failing grades to Norfolk Southern and Canadian National, a "C" grade to CSX Transportation, a "B-" to Union Pacific, a "B+" to BNSF Railway and the highest marks to Canadian Pacific. The report notes that the host railroads are "highly profitable" and that Amtrak pays them \$142 million annually for use of their tracks and other resources needed to operate passenger trains. "An 'F' host forces Amtrak trains on a particular route to wait one hour and 40 minutes, on average, for freight trains, and forces many Amtrak trains on this route to wait as long as 3 hours and 12 minutes," the report reads. "As a comparison, suppose you were on a flight and your plane had to circle the destination airport for one hour and 40 minutes while cargo flights were given

priority to use the runway.” Amtrak’s report also faults the U.S. Department of Justice for failing to enforce the government corporation’s statutory right of preference over freight trains in dispatching, and says the incentives it pays hosts for good performance have little impact. “Freight railroads suffer no significant consequences for prioritizing their freight over our country’s rail passengers,” Amtrak claims. (TN)

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**PRESIDENT TRUMP ON FRIDAY SIGNED** the \$1.3-trillion omnibus spending bill, keeping the government running through September and freeing up federal funding for Amtrak and the Gateway project he had opposed. as much as \$541 million is available for Gateway, which would construct a new tunnel underneath the Hudson River linking New Jersey and New York, and replace the century-old Portal Bridge on the Northeast Corridor leading to Manhattan. Approval for the funds would circumvent opposition from the Department of Transportation; Secretary Elaine Chao had wanted New York and New Jersey to finance most of the massive project. According to reports, Amtrak is expected to contribute a minimum of \$388 million to Gateway through its Northeast Corridor Account, while New York and New Jersey will receive an additional \$153 million from the Federal Transit Administration’s High-Density States and State of Good Repair grant programs. While negotiations are ongoing, Gateway will likely receive 60% of the original federal dollars intended for it within omnibus. Trump had threatened to veto the spending bill if it included funds for Gateway, among other reasons. Although DOT reviews Amtrak’s operations, reports said it will have limited ability to withhold \$650 million for the Northeast Corridor Account under the omnibus, for projects throughout the region. At the same time, Gateway can compete for additional money through the New Starts Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program, which is slated to receive \$2.645 billion. Gateway has two pending applications for the grants, to replace the Portal Bridge over the Hackensack River in northern New Jersey, and for the Hudson Tunnel project. USDOT will have \$27.3 billion in discretionary appropriations for FY18, but the House Appropriations Committee says that in total budgetary resources, including offsetting collections, the bill provides \$86.2 billion to improve and maintain transportation infrastructure. The popular Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program will get a \$1

billion boost over FY17 levels with \$1.5 billion available. Language in the bill ensures that at least 30 percent of these grants will go to rural communities. (RA)

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

**TRAINS**

Once a Leader, Now a Follower  
 The Straight Story on Tilting  
 California Rising

**MODEL RAILROADER**

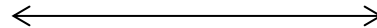
A Tale of Two Railroads

**RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN**

Consider the Commuter

**PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL** 2018-1

Brightline Begins  
 Holiday on Rails 2017  
 The Siemens Diesel-Electric SC-Series  
 Penn Central—A Short, Troubled Life  
 New Haven’s Owl



News sources: [Boston Globe](#), [Boston Herald](#), Amtrak “News”, [Trains Newswire](#), [Railway Age](#), [Railpace](#) Newsmagazine, RRE “Callboy”, “The 470”, [Patriot Ledger](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), The Detroit [News](#).

**MEMBER NEWS**

Honorary member **Dick Kozlowski** suffered some medical issues, while visiting before our Show and Open House, and landed up at South Shore Hospital. He is still there recovering and can be visited. Our thoughts and prayers go out for a speedy recovery, Dick!

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

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

- Chip Mullen ..... April 7
- Bob Knapp ..... April 8
- Skip Burton ..... April 13
- Rick Pearson..... April 20
- Al Gray ..... April 21
- Jack Doyle ..... April 27
- Ed Sisk..... April 30

## EDITOR'S NOTES

1. **Bryan Miller** would like to thank everyone who donated baked goods to “**Jack’s Red Tails Café**”. He also thanks those who helped work at the table. Because of everyone’s efforts, the Café was a great success!
2. Thanks to **Jay Pease** for **donating the case of 24-lb paper**, which we use for the *Semaphore*. Always nice to not have to spend money on supplies! Also, nice that Jay came all the way out from Worcester County to participate in yesterday’s Operations!

..... *David N. Clinton*

### RUNNING EXTRA

#### **MBTA changes could shorten commute**

(By Patrick Anderson, Providence Journal 2-28-18)

Riding from Providence to Boston by train should take 45 minutes — not 70 minutes — an influential Massachusetts transit advocacy group said in a new report aimed at reinventing commuter rail in the region. And that service should be reliable and frequent, the group, TransitMatters, wrote, with northbound trains pulling out of Providence Station every 15 minutes and fewer breakdowns than the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority riders are now used to.

An overhaul of the Providence Line, at least partially funded by Rhode Island, is one of the initial steps in TransitMatters’ \$2-billion to \$3-billion plan for the region with the goal of making commuter rail faster, more frequent, more efficient, cleaner and more reliable. It recommends that a commuter rail run somewhat more like a subway system and integrate better with subways and buses. “MBTA Commuter Rail operates as a mid-20th century service and reflects all of that era’s biases about where people and jobs are located,” the report states. “It assumes everyone works 9 to 5 on weekdays, and that travelers must be lured from their cars with ample parking. “Regional Rail promises passengers freedom of access by transit

from wherever they are to wherever they are going across the region. With train service at frequent intervals, passengers won’t be burdened by multi-hour waits.”

To do this, the group proposes a series of changes, including abandoning the diesel locomotives that now pull MBTA trains in favor of self-propelled electric cars, known as EMUs, like those used in subways and the commuter railroad between Connecticut and New York City. The electric trains are more reliable, less expensive, produce no emissions and both stop and start faster than locomotives, the report states. TransitMatters also recommends building full-length raised platforms at the eight stations on the Providence Line, which would make it easier and faster for riders to board trains, reducing travel times further.

On the Providence Line, which is already electrified, the paper estimates running electric trains and building raised platforms will reduce travel times by around 40 percent. That would cut the length of a trip between Providence and Boston from around 70 minutes to around 43 minutes to Back Bay and 46 minutes to South Station. The TransitMatters plan calls for trains to run every 15 minutes to Providence at peak times and every half-hour off-peak. Half of those trains would continue to Wickford Junction. It also recommends free transfers between commuter rail trains, subways and buses.

The paper does not provide a cost estimate of buying new electric trains, raising platforms and electrifying some sidings on the Providence Line, but it looks to Rhode Island to chip in. “We anticipate funding participation coming from both Amtrak and Rhode Island as these initiatives benefit riders using Amtrak and living or working in Rhode Island,” the report states. While TransitMatters sees all lines eventually running with electric train sets and raised platforms, it spotlights the Providence Line as the obvious place to start phasing in these changes due to high ridership and electrification already in place for Amtrak trains.

Separately, it supports construction of the North-South Rail Link tunnel between North Station and South Station while abandoning expansion of South Station.

“If all of this went through, from Providence to Back Bay would be a 43-minute trip — it is effectively a subway service where you won’t have to worry about missing a train,” said Peter Brassard, a coauthor of the paper and chairman of the Rhode Island Association of Railroad Passengers. “For Providence employers, there are a large amount of reverse commuters and they would really benefit because, in some cases, they are paying for Amtrak for flexibility and schedule.”

Gov. Gina Raimondo has previously said she wants the MBTA to add new express service to Providence, an idea some TransitMatters members have criticized. Raimondo’s deputy chief of staff, Rosemary Powers, attended the TransitMatters report release in Boston. “We support the concepts in this document — we are very interested in improved service with shorter trip times,” R.I. DOT spokesman Charles St. Martin wrote in an email about the report. MBTA spokesman Joe Pesaturo wrote that the agency is working with TransitMatters and conducting a study of commuter rail operations due by late 2019. (“Pie-in-the-sky”, IMHO-Ed.)

From March 2018 RRE “Callboy”

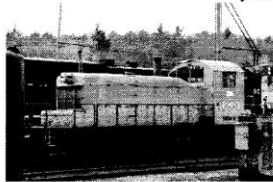


**Boston & Maine SW-1 1113 in its original livery. (Photo courtesy BSRM)**

## Mt. Tom switcher to be preserved by BSRM

By Phil Johnson

The switcher that was at Mt Tom power plant has been saved! The Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum has rescued it and will repaint it into original Boston and Maine colors: black with red nose striping. BSRM plans to use the locomotive on its *Hoosac Valley Service* excursion line running between Adams and North Adams.



**BMRX 1849, the former B&M SW-1 1113, at East Deerfield on Feb. 24, 2018, awaiting delivery to the Berkshire Scenic. (Phil Johnson photo)**

The SW-1 is a 600-horsepower diesel-electric locomotive that was manufactured by General Motors' Electro-Motive Corporation in La Grange, Illinois. A total of 661 units were built. Boston &

Maine bought 24 SW-1s between 1939 and 1953 (the last year of production) units, numbered 1109-1132. The 1113 was delivered to the B&M in November, 1941. It was sold to the Mt. Tom power plant in Holyoke, Massachusetts, in 1960.

FirstLight Power Resources operated the yellow SW-1, with road number 1849, as a coal train yard switcher at the Mt. Tom Power Plant until the plant’s closing. The Mount Tom station opened in 1960 as a coal-fired plant. It was converted to burn oil for about 10 years when the price of oil was low in 1970. After its conversion back to coal, it eventually bowed to environmental concerns and closed in December 2014. This was the last coal-fired power plant in Massachusetts. There is now a 5.76 megawatt solar farm on the property; the City of Holyoke plans on converting the property to a riverfront park.

I found on Saturday morning, February 24, 2018 in the engine ready area at PanAm’s East Deerfield, wearing BMRX 1849 reporting marks and a FirstLight decal.

EDITED FROM THE BURLINGTON (VT) FREE PRESS, JANUARY 18, 2018

## Vermont-Montreal train project rolls forward

By April McCullum

**MONTPELIER** – The effort to restore passenger train service between Vermont and Montreal has cleared major legislative hurdles in the United States and Canada, but several logistical challenges remain.

The Canadian Parliament approved legislation last month that would allow a new security clearance facility to be built in Montreal’s Central Station, where passengers would be screened as they come and go from Canada. The U.S. Congress already approved a similar measure. “That legally allows the two countries to work in each other’s countries,” said Daniel Delabruere, rail program director for the Vermont Agency of Transportation, speaking at a recent meeting of the Vermont House Transportation Committee. “Now we’re going to be allowed to send customs and border protection folks into Montreal and actually work.”

Details of when, and exactly how, the trains will run must still be decided. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., is a champion of the project. “With this legislation now in place, Canada and the United States – and especially Vermont – are poised to reap the rewards of improved border security and better economic growth,” Leahy said in a December statement. “I look forward to continuing my work and partnership with the Canadian government to make expanded preclearance a reality.”

Leahy’s office said the same legislative effort is expected to improve air service between Burlington International Airport and Toronto City Airport.

The Vermonter train brought passengers to Montreal from 1972 to 1995, when the service was suspended due to long labor- and security-related delays at the border. The train currently runs from Washington, D.C. to St. Albans. The new leg of the route would run

from St. Albans to Montreal without stopping.

In addition to reviving the Vermont route, the security facility would also expedite border crossings for the *Adirondack* train that runs between New York City and Montreal. That train currently stops at the border for about 1.5 or 2 hours, Delabruere said.

Delabruere was unwilling to provide a timeframe for the long-awaited project when he spoke with lawmakers. “Timing? I don’t know,” Delabruere said, according to a recording of the committee meeting. “Three years,” one committee member suggested, laughing. “That was what we heard five years ago,” another lawmaker recalled.

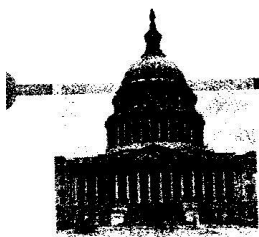
Delabruere said funding for the project remains unclear. He said the route needs about seven miles of track upgrades, recalling an “inspection tour” he took with other officials last summer “You literally can feel the border,” he said.

Officials on both sides of the border need to work out logistical challenges to ensure the train runs directly from St. Albans to Montreal without stopping, even to allow another train to cross. Switches, crossings and bridges along the route must be in place before the train can leave St. Albans.

Delabruere said U.S. and Canadian officials must work together to decide how to handle passengers who do not pass security clearance after they arrive in Canada. “As you can see, it’s fairly complicated, right? There’s a lot to it,” he said. “You don’t just start the train and go.”

Brian Searles, a consultant on the project, told lawmakers in 2016 that Amtrak would schedule four trains through Montreal daily, or one round trip each for the *Vermonter* and the *Adirondack*.

[Contributed by Jeff Cohn]



## CAPITOL UNLIMITED

JIM MATTHEWS/PRESIDENT & CEO, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS



# Let's Take a Second Look at Converting Rails to Trails

This Christmas my future daughter-in-law got me a Fitbit, an unobtrusive little electro-gizmo bracelet that tracks my exercise, my sleep habits and even how many steps I take each day and whether I get in a bike ride. It also delivered the welcome news that I'm not doing too badly for an old guy. That's because while I wouldn't call myself a fitness nut, my volunteer life (firefighting, air search and rescue) demands that I remain able to answer the call when it comes.

In recent months NARP has begun advocating for A Connected America, which invests in links between intercity trains and airports, intercity buses, local transit, cycling and walking, and car rental and sharing service to create a seamless 21st Century multi-modal transportation network, coast-to-coast - connecting "fly-over country" to the nation's larger economy and prospects.

This means that for the most part we should find ourselves in common cause with the other Fitbit-wearing folks who advocate for better bike access and safe bike trails. And in many cases, we do. I myself have been known to enjoy the old W&OD trail that winds through Fairfax County, Virginia, in suburban DC. The Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC), founded in 1980, has some 160,000 members, a \$6 million annual budget and one goal: conversion of rail rights of way into trails. In 1980 that was a pretty benign goal, with many rail abandonments and an ample supply of unused roadbeds. Fast-forward to today, however, and our capacity-constrained rail network faces a different set of problems.

Now the Rails to Trails movement is shifting gears and going after active railroads—tourist, shortline freight, dormant, abandoned and even Class 1 mainline. I know fitness aficionados can be fanatical, but I worry that this is counter-productive to all concerned. It's one thing to encourage urban residents to ditch their cars for pedal-powered commuting, but it's quite another to advocate for dismantling an irreplaceable national asset

that represents the greenest alternative that exists to highways.

The national RTC says it has no control over local groups. But those groups are using RTC's tools to threaten at least a dozen lines coast-to-coast, including those in upstate New York and even the Miami-Orlando rail trail on the All Aboard Florida/Florida East Coast right-of-way.

Chopping up the network stub-by-stub is short-sighted and sets up the potential for more harm to the very environment that bike advocates claim to defend. Last year congestion caused the average commuter to waste 42 hours burning \$1,000 worth of gas while idling in traffic. Consider that statistic alongside the reality that a two-track railroad can do the same work in one hour as 16 highway lanes at rush hour, and dismantling active railroads makes less sense than ever.

Smaller railroads are up against a well-organized and well-funded trails community with clout and connections. This is especially true in New York, where the Adirondack Scenic Railroad and the Catskill Mountain Railroad are fighting for their lives against not only trail supporters, but politicians who have been persuaded to join the trail side. Trail supporters like to trot out all manner of "studies" that purport to show fantastic economic benefits if only the railroad is junked. Most trail riders are fitness- and environment-oriented folks, and they mean well. But too many others engage in bullying and lying about railroads and rail's benefits, which should be complementary rather than competitive.

NARP cares about this because sooner or later, a nationally important line or

right way will be threatened or lost and once it's gone, it will be very difficult to get back. RTC contends that a trail can always be repurposed for a railroad if the need arises, but the reality is considerably harder. To date, only a couple of trails have been converted back to rail. We're looking for concerned rail travelers to keep special watch on The Adirondack Scenic, where trail supporters just got New York to issue a preliminary recommendation to pull the railroad out between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid (a major tourist destination) and the All Aboard Florida project, where trail advocates are calling for trails on AAF property between Miami and Orlando. If you live in these areas, it's worth a phone call, e-mail or letter to your local legislator or mayor.

The problem as I see it is that as they race by on their bikes, local advocates are missing the forest for the trees. Trail proposals are evaluated in a local-only, piecemeal way, without regard to the value that a National Network brings to A Connected America. Rail and trail advocates really do have common ground and can and should be natural allies.

Connecting bikes to rail transport is a major policy goal for NARP. Dismantling the best answer this country has for coping with population growth to some 400 million by 2040 should not be the only way to create trails and connections for bikers to use for work and play. We believe it's time for the Surface Transportation Board and Congress to look at revisiting the regulatory process outlined in the Federal Transportation Alternatives Program to ensure that railroads under threat of conversion get more than the cursory glance I give my Fitbit while I'm riding my bike. ■