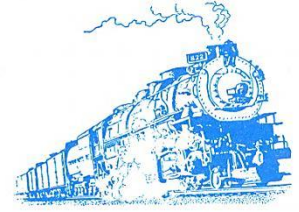


# The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



AUGUST 26, 2019 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 39 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 8





# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Cape Cod News.....	Skip Burton
Boston <u>Herald</u> Reporter.....	Jim South
Boston <u>Globe &amp; Wall Street Journal</u> Reporters	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Western Massachusetts.....	Ron Clough
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
“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. ©2019  
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### CLUB OFFICERS

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**ON THE COVER: “Official Operations” August 12<sup>th</sup>.**

Photos by Joe Dumas



## *In Memoriam*

Barry S. Doland

June 20, 1950 - August 9, 2019



On Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, our fellow member and my good friend Barry passed away, after a 5-year fight with pancreatic cancer. Barry “beat the odds” of surviving this disease for one year or less. And we’re so glad for having him with us the 37 years he was a member. Such a positive attitude...that’s what kept him going and why his close friends knick-named him “Barry: like a cat with 9 lives”.

I met Barry in 1981, through a co-worker Frank Ellis, who was also a railroad-enthusiast. Frank took slides, as did I, and took them into Woolworth’s at the Hanover Mall to get developed and purchase film. In those days, Woolworth’s occupied two different spaces in the Mall and Barry was the Camera Dept. manager in the store closest to Zayre’s. In a conversation, Frank mentioned that the sales person he dealt with at Woolworth’s was a train enthusiast and I should meet him. So I did. After my first conversation with Barry, I knew that he should be a member of the SSMRC. He was so enthusiastic about trains—and a good salesman! I invited him to visit the Club (in Weymouth at the time); he came down and liked what he saw and the members he met. He filled out an application and I sponsored him for membership, which he gained in November 1982. And our friendship began.



Barry became a very active member, participating in everything, including being on the Board of Directors, vice-president and member of several committees. Being in retail his whole career, he developed a special interest in the White Elephant Table, which at the time was run by Al Taylor and Chuck Cullum. His enthusiasm earned him chairmanship and the W.E.T. went from a couple of tables at the shows in St. Jerome’s Church, to 6-10 at the Weymouth High School, to a meeting room full of tables in our Hingham building. Gross and Net Income have soared...and it was because of Barry’s enthusiasm and willingness to go out of his way to obtain collections and donations for the W.E.T. Our Annual Christmas Auction was another function where Barry’s personality and animation, as the auctioneer, has increased participation and income. When visitors and those interested in membership showed up at the door, Barry’s “salesmanship” shone brightly, as he took them around the railroad explaining all the intricacies of the

various committees’ work.

Barry always asked if he could help, so he got lassoed into helping me organize the various “social activities” in the Club, like trips on The *Downeaster* and “Junk Food Jollies”. He loved taking railfan trips, starting with many that Frank, he and I would take out to the Berkshires to see Conrail and the B&M. He enjoyed longer trips, too: overnight with Paul III, Dan and Jason, Chris and others to such places as the Berkshire Scenic RR, NYC, Washington, D.C., Steamtown, Essex CT, Palmer, White River Jct. and Montreal. “Wally World” was a “must” every fall, when a large group of us would visit Honorary Member Wally Chase in Lewiston, ME. We’d ride the Maine Eastern train, run Wally’s great layout Saturday night and railfan all the way home on Sunday. Such happy memories—now those members are both gone. When we started having tables at “The Big E”, Barry had great ideas for increasing our “presence” and publicity--thank-goodness for his retail experience! He joined the New Haven RR Historical & Technical Association (even though he was more of a B&M guy) and always went to the shows and helped man the tables and pack everything up at the end of the show. His enthusiasm and positive attitude continued to the end.



“He is such a nice man”, said my sister, upon hearing of his latest condition. Two other people I know said exactly the same thing. Barry was a nice person and always made, or tried to make you laugh. Quite a sense of humor—annoying, at times, but we loved him for his personality and that made you want to be with him, despite his *Moxie* fixation and despite him being “Captain Obvious” on many occasions. Barry never swore in the 38 years I knew him; he was God-fearing but never pushed religion or his political views on anyone. He was a great conversationalist, a great member and a great friend. Truly, he was “such a nice man”.

We miss you, Barry. May you rest in peace...until we meet again, my friend.

David N. Clinton

## FORM 19 ORDERS

### AUGUST B.O.D. MEETING

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

### DECODER & TUNE-UP CLINIC

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

### SEPTEMBER BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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

### SEPTEMBER B.O.D.

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

## CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Jim Ferris** on winning the July 50/50 raffle! Congratulations to **Bob England** on winning the August 50/50 raffle!

This month's contest was won by **Jim Ferris**, who knew that the Cog Railway is the other railroad in the U.S. celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, besides the UP. Here's who else entered the correct answer:

Jim South     Dan Peterson  
                    Ron Clough

Jim took home the newest Intermountain offering, a Delaware & Hudson boxcar from the 1950s. Congratulations!

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

I want to start this month with an addition to the Monday night critique of August 12<sup>th</sup>, which I did not think of at the time. During the critique there was comments how one or more engineers had problems with their trains, the discussion centered more on the delays caused by engineers trying to fix the problem on the main, which snowballed into significant delays. My suggestion is this: members putting out their own trains that may not have been run in a while for an "Ops" session should test run them on the route they will be assigned to discover any defects prior to the "Ops" session. This is something we recommend for



shows for several years now and has worked well. The "Ops" Committee and their helpers do a real good job to set up for an operation; it takes a lot of work and I know time gets tight sometimes, but it would be worth the extra effort-- my two cents worth.

Progress over the past couple of months has been good, the Benchwork Committee has been working on the supporting structure for the Boston Division inside the "staging room", and they have also started building the benchwork for the new section of the railroad that will replace the Boston / Great Lakes staging yards. This new section will be as complete as possible, except for scenery, before it is put in place.

Stan is working on the new model board for the West Middleton end of the yard, doing the graphic work and the electrical work; both slow and tedious work. He did the East end board, which is installed and working, but members will have to crawl into Middleton pit to see the finished product. Scenery work is ongoing in Cedar Hill, as mentioned in past months. Scenery work also at White River Junction, near the wye, and on the narrow gauge. The quarry scene has been taken out, but will be used when the narrow gauge is extended in the "staging room". The area has been filled with foam and plastered over with one building placed at the end of the next track over that looks pretty good, the rest of the area is TBD.

That's it for this month, comments or questions are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

## DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Former member **Ross Hall** was our only "customer" for this month's Clinic. Ross brought an old PFM brass B&M Mogul. This small steamer was a good candidate for the DZ123 decoder, as it fit in the front of the boiler, near the smokebox, and did not require any wiring between the loco and tender. Only problem was with a bad solder joint holding on the rear (under cab) bracing, that attaches the chassis. 5-min. epoxy is good for attaching parts, which have fallen off painted, brass models.

**Our next Clinic will be Thursday, September 5<sup>th</sup> and there will not be a clinic in October.** Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

## SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

### AUGUST 2014 (5 years ago)

- First "Official Operations" in 2 ½ years.
- Cass Scenic RR leases operation and equipment to the West Virginia Rail Authority.
- Central Maine & Quebec Rwy purchases Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Rwy's Canadian lines; began U.S. operations in May.
- UP donates B40-8 to Illinois Railway Museum, complete and operable. The first electronic fuel injection unit in the Museum's collection.
- Western Maryland Scenic RR, B&O RR Museum and Hulcher Services successfully loads main boiler and cab of C&O 2-6-6-2 #1309 onto heavy-duty flat car and delivers to Cumberland, MD, home of WMSR.
- Seashore Trolley Museum celebrates 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- RFP by Amtrak for new *Acela Express* equipment.
- Saratoga & North Creek Rwy cuts service from seven to four days/week. Beginning of downhill slide.
- MassDOT purchases "Berkshire Line" between Pittsfield and Sheffield, at the CT line, from Housatonic RR.
- Railroad Model Craftsman magazine ceases publication as Carstens Publications shuts down.
- MassDOT plans to purchase "Knowledge Corridor" from Pan Am Southern; line between Springfield and East Northfield on the border with Vermont.

### AUGUST 2009 (10 years ago)

- BNSF unveiled an operational hydrogen fuel cell loco.
- VIA Rail Canada drops names of *Chaleur*, *Hudson Bay* and *Skeena* trains.
- State of Wisconsin agrees to purchase two new Talgo trainsets for Chicago-Milwaukee service.
- Toronto Transit Authority places largest-ever single order for light rail vehicles in the World—204 low-floor streetcars, valued at C\$735 million.
- Amtrak puts out RFPs for new electric locomotives and Viewliner II single-level passenger cars.
- Maine Eastern RR wants to extend passenger service the State's capital, Augusta.
- After 50 years of neglected maintenance, ex-NH yard at Cedar Hill sees major overhaul. (taking example of ECL!)
- Group of historians and state and local officials trying to find way to save historic Attleboro Tower.
- Non-profit organization signs agreement to operate East Broad Top RR for three years, with intention of buying RR from Kowalchicks, owners.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic proposes to abandon 241 miles of track in northern Maine. Suggests State could purchase.
- Norfolk Southern awards \$100,000 grant to Penn State in Altoona, to help create a 4-yr Rail & Transit Engineering Program.
- Amtrak begins 2<sup>nd</sup> *Cascades* trip between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

- Relco Locomotives, Inc. finish work turning ex-GN441, an F45, that will serve as lodging at the Izaak Walton Inn at Essex, MT. Interior features master suite with king bed, spacious living area, fully-equipped kitchen and floors made of 100-year old antique oak. Operator's cab restored to better-than-new condition and by flipping a switch, visitors can open a 60-inch picture window that looks out on the BNSF's Chicago-Seattle main line.

- Grafton & Upton RR purchased by Jon Delli Priscoli.

### AUGUST 2004 (15 years ago)

- VIA Rail Canada celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Ocean between Montreal & Halifax.
  - Last Green Line trolley traverses S-curves around Fleet Center, before demolition of "the EI" at North Station.
  - Edaville property owner John Delli Priscoli decides to shorten ride from 5-miles to 2-miles and build homes on 22-acre land.
  - Groundbreaking for new Lawrence RR station.
  - Guilford relegates last SD45 to dead line.
  - "Steaming Tender" take-out restaurant opens in Palmer at old Union Station building.
  - BNSF tests cab-mounted cameras on six locos.
  - Transportation Bond Bill earmarks \$66 million for Fall River/New Bedford Commuter Rail.
  - Maine Eastern RR decides to continue their Brunswick-Rockland train on weekends through October; it was a July-only train, originally.
  - White Pass & Yukon takes delivery of eight new Parlor cars, bringing fleet to 69 cars.
  - Amtrak's Turboliners, centerpiece of up-state NY passenger rail program, taken out of service due to poor reliability.
  - Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington steamer #10 under steam for the first time since operating at "Pleasure Island" (in Wakefield, MA 1959-69).
  - Amtrak's *Adirondack* celebrates 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Considered by many to be most beautiful train ride in the East.
- ### AUGUST 1999 (20 Years Ago)
- Years of negotiations brings hulks of D&H Alco Pas #16 & #18 back to U.S.
  - Motive Power Industries and Westinghouse Air Brake merger.
  - Proposal to build 850-mile rail connection between Alaska and lower 48 states.
  - VIA Rail Canada announces *Brass d'Or* service to Cape Breton from Halifax to begin in 2000.
  - Edaville opening set for Labor Day weekend under Jack Flagg's "Cranrail Corp".
  - Canton Jct. station moved back from the tracks.
  - Amtrak's *Acela* trainset testing in Pueblo, CO.
  - Pentrex discontinues *RailNews* and *Vintage Rails*.
  - Workers begin laying new rails in Plaistow, NH for *Downeaster* service.
  - Conway Scenic RR celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - Environmental report shows best line for FR/NB Commuter Rail through Easton.



- Cape Cod RR Budd RDC#6126 sold to Belfast & Moosehead Lake RR in Maine.
- Boise Locomotive awarded contract to overhaul all MBTA's F40PH-2C locos.
- Canadian National takes control of Illinois Central Corp., creating fifth largest North American RR.
- SSMRC members order \$7,000+ worth of decoders, taking advantage of "1X offer" from Digitrax.
- Dan Peterson joins SSMRC.
- Honorary Member Kurt Kramke achieves "Master Model Railroader" designation from the NMRA.

#### **AUGUST 1994** (25 Years Ago)

- Burlington Northern and Santa Fe sign agreement to merge.
- P&W sells their Canadian M420s.
- Belfast & Moosehead Lake RR takes delivery of Swedish steam locomotive and passenger cars.
- Maine Narrow Gauge RR gets permission to lay track along "Eastern Promenade" waterfront in Portland, ME.
- First of the old Red Line cars scrapped.
- NS and Conrail talk of merging.

#### **AUGUST 1989** (30 Years Ago)

- Amtrak goes to 2X yearly timetable from 3X.
- Steamtown in Scranton, PA, begins operating steam excursions, for first time since moving there in 1983.
- Remaining VIA FPA-4 locos retired.
- Rail operations on CN's Prince Edward Island narrow gauge line are abandoned.
- Seashore Trolley Museum celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- CPR proposes abandonment of Dominion Atlantic Rwy from Kentville to Yarmouth, NS.
- CSX opens dispatching center in FL.
- Amtrak operates prototype "Viewliner" in *Night Owl* service between Boston and Washington to test passenger reaction.
- MBTA celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- First trash train operates from Otis AFB to SeaMass plant in Rochester, MA.
- State spends \$1.2 million restoring both Buzzards Bay and Falmouth train stations.
- MBTA decides to charge for parking at previously-free lots.
- MBTA to spend \$100 million for 86 new Red Line cars, replacing fleet built in 1960.
- Amtrak's *Montrealer* restored after 27-month hiatus, due to poor Guilford track. New route uses CV from New London, CT.
- Amtrak introduces *Atlantic City Express*, with direct service from New York, Washington and Philadelphia.
- MBTA orders first Bi-level Commuter cars.

#### **AUGUST 1984** (35 Years Ago)

- SSMRC youth group, later called "The Hyballers", has first meeting with five teenagers.
- Guilford applies to abandon 259 miles of MEC track, including "Mountain Division" through Crawford Notch.
- Amtrak begins daily *Auto-Train Service*.
- Ball signals from Waumbek Jct., NH, guarding MEC-B&M crossing, donated to Conway Scenic RR.

- Ridership on Braintree-Hyannis Cape Cod & Hyannis RR train triples, after only three weeks of operation.
- Appalachian Mountain Club restores ex-MEC station "Crawfords" in Crawford Notch, NH.
- U.S. D.O.T. decides to take bids on sale of Conrail.

## POTPOURRI

**THE MASSDOT BOARD OF DIRECTORS** and the MBTA Fiscal Management and Control Board voted June 18 to approve the five-year \$18.3 billion MassDOT and MBTA Capital Investment Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2020-2024. The approved CIP will bring an increase of about \$1 billion over the most recent five-year CIP. Officials said the CIP includes all MassDOT rail and transit projects, including the MBTA and Regional Transit Authorities as well as the Registry of Motor Vehicles, in addition to all road and bridge projects and work related to public use airports. The CIP includes investments ranging in scale and in purpose—from small-scale maintenance projects to large-scale multimodal modernization projects. The CIP also includes long-term investments and funding obligations to maintain, modernize and expand the transportation system. The CIP is a rolling five-year plan that is updated annually, representatives explained. Approximately 45% of the \$18.3 billion in total investments identified for the next five years is expected to be focused on the reliability and resiliency of the core transportation system. Another 28% of the funding is devoted to modernizing the system in order to better accommodate anticipated growth and respond to increased accessibility and safety requirements that may not have existed when these assets were originally built. (RA)

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**AFTER FIVE YEARS** of internal planning, VIA Rail's vision of a dedicated, high-frequency passenger railway from Quebec City to Toronto has secured the backing of the new Canada Infrastructure Bank. A C\$55 million investment by the bank was announced June 25 for final pre-procurement planning, including the engineering of technical inter-operation with existing commuter lines in Montreal and Toronto. Another C\$16 million will be anteed up by Transport Canada. With its total \$71 million, a "Joint Project Team" of the bank and VIA Rail is to develop the scheme to the point where it can be pitched next year to private-sector

investors, notably, the country's rich public pension funds. The original and so-far unrevised cost estimates for the project range from C\$4 billion, for a low-ball diesel-powered service, to C\$6 billion for a more politically appealing electrified (overhead catenary) line drawing carbon-free energy from Quebec's abundant hydroelectric capacity. The announcement represents the government's move from a yellow "approach" to a red-over-green "limited speed" endorsement of the project. It stops short of the green-over-red "clear" signal that could conclude this final evaluation stage. The most difficult integration will be with Montreal's Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM), which is due to run its first driverless trains in 2021. With REM's three-minute headways planned through Central Station's Mont Royal Tunnel, slotting in VIA Rail's heavier intercity passenger trains will be an engineering and operational challenge. The government announcement explicitly includes the design of "track work in Montreal's Mont-Royal Tunnel to enable VIA Rail Canada's heavy-rail trains to operate on this segment of the REM light rail system. "High Frequency Rail is part of VIA Rail Canada's transformation toward a more modern passenger service for a more connected, more sustainable and more mobile Canada," said VIA Rail's recently appointed CEO, Cynthia Garneau. "We look forward to working with the Canada Infrastructure Bank in this critical step for improving passenger rail to the benefit of Canadians." In May, Garneau (no relation to Transport Minister Marc Garneau) succeeded Yves Desjardins-Siciliano who, during his five-year term, mentored the high-frequency corridor project from original concept to practical imminence. (RA)

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**"TODAY WAS A LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT** for me, to get the U S government to grant a waiver on their ruling ...the industry realized the old way is better and safer!" said Kevin Linagen on June 29<sup>th</sup>, as his ex-PRR Caboose was attached to the local Fore River RR freight



heading out to the CSX interchange in Braintree. Congratulations to Kevin, on all his hard work and energy expended to



make this (finally) happen!

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**THE PENDING CLOSURE** of the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery will put a dent in crude oil traffic on BNSF Railway and CSX Transportation. The refinery, which suffered damage in a massive fire the last week of June, is the largest on the East Coast. After the accident, the refinery's owners announced that the 153-year-old complex along the Schuylkill River would be shut down. The Philadelphia refinery received unit trains of crude oil that originated on BNSF in the Bakken oil field of North Dakota and were interchanged with CSX in Chicago. The refinery, which dates to 1870 on a site that has been used to store refined products since 1866, was capable of receiving two 120-car unit trains per day. The 140,000 barrel capacity of two trains represented 40% of the refinery's capacity of 335,000 barrels per day. In 2013, Philadelphia Energy Solutions spent \$186 million to build a rail terminal that includes 5.6 miles of track and a high-speed unloader. Pennsylvania contributed \$25 million to the project. At the time of the first crude-by-rail boom, the refinery was the largest single destination for oil produced in North Dakota. Energy analysts were not surprised by the decision to close the refinery, which had slim profit margins and was not particularly sophisticated. (TN)

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**ALASKA RAILROAD** Corporation has signed a master agreement with Alaska to Alberta Development Corporation (A2A Rail) to cooperate on the development of a \$13-billion project to connect the state to the North American railway network. The 2400km line would connect Alaska Railroad's Delta Junction railhead with Fort McMurray in the Canadian province of Alberta, where it would meet the Canadian National (CN) network. The line would be privately owned and constructed by A2A Rail. A2A Rail says it has assembled a team of more than 40 people and spent \$46 million) over the last year to move the project forward, and over the remainder of this year it plans to continue engagement with communities and First Peoples as well as engineering design, route planning, environmental assessments and regulatory applications. Alaska Railroad and A2A Rail will work together on an application to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources seeking a guaranteed route alignment under state law. Approval of the alignment by the Alaskan state government, the US Surface Transportation Board

and the Canadian Transportation Agency will be needed before construction can begin. The project will also require a presidential border crossing permit. In April the state senate unanimously approved a resolution call on the US Secretary of State to approve permits for the project. “A rail connection between Alaska and Canada and the rest of the United States is a project that has been talked and dreamed about for close to a century,” says Alaska Railroad president and CEO Bill O’Leary. “Completing that connection has amazing potential for Alaska and this agreement between the Alaska Railroad and A2A Rail is an important first step to get the project underway.” (RA)

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**BROOKFIELD INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERS**

LP and Genesee & Wyoming, Inc. (G&W) have come to terms on an agreement for the latter to be acquired via an \$8.4 billion transaction—including outstanding debt. According to the deal, which has been in the works for a couple of months, “each issued and outstanding share of G&W will be converted into the right to receive \$112 per share in cash. The Transaction price of \$112 per share of G&W common stock represents a 39.5% premium to the unaffected per share price of \$80.28 on March 8, 2019, the day prior to initial media speculation of a potential transaction,” G&W said in a press release. The transaction—expected to close by year’s end or early 2020—would make G&W a privately held company and is subject to customary closing conditions, such as approval by G&W stockholders holding 66 2/3% of the outstanding common stock, required regulatory approvals that include approval by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, and certain competition and antitrust approvals. G&W owns or leases 120 freight railroads in eight operating regions with approximately 8,000 employees serving 3,000 customers. Its six North American regions serve 41 U.S. states and four Canadian provinces, and include 114 short line and regional freight railroads with more than 13,000 track miles; its Australia Region includes New South Wales, the Northern Territory and South Australia, and serves the 1,400-mile Tarcoola-to-Darwin line; and the U.K./Europe region includes the U.K.’s “largest rail maritime intermodal operator and second-largest freight rail provider, as well as regional rail services in Continental Europe.” “This is a rare opportunity to acquire a large-scale transport infrastructure business in North America,” said Sam Pollock,

CEO, Brookfield Infrastructure. “G&W will be a significant addition to our global rail platform and will expand our presence in this sector to four continents. G&W provides critical transportation services to more than 3,000 customers, and its cash flows have proven to be highly resilient over many years. Brookfield Infrastructure is well-suited to work with the company to continue to improve the business, given our significant experience owning and operating rail, ports and other large-scale, transportation infrastructure businesses.”

“As a long-term investor, GIC is confident G&W will continue to generate steady profitability, given its diversified operations and customer base,” said Ang Eng Seng, CIO for Infrastructure, GIC. “We look forward to partnering with G&W’s management and Brookfield Infrastructure to support the future growth of the company.” (RA)

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**A FORMER MBTA** worker has pleaded guilty to stealing more than \$450,000 from bus and trolley fare boxes. The Associated Press reports that Stephen Fagerberg, 55, was caught when investigators planted marked bills in fare collection boxes Fagerberg was supposed to service. Those bills then ended up in his personal bank account. Fagerberg was sentenced in Suffolk Superior Court to six months in jail, with the balance of a two-year sentence suspended for two years. He was also given two years of probation and ordered to pay \$458,694 in restitution. (TN)

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**CALTRAIN**, the commuter rail service that runs between San Francisco, San Jose, and Gilroy, California has recently begun a large project to electrify most of their rail line. As part of this project, Caltrain purchased two old Amtrak AEM-7s to test the new electrical infrastructure once it’s completed. In June, #929 & 938 made their way to San Francisco via Amtrak’s California Zephyr. Electrification is expected to be completed in 2021.

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**THE “416 FIRE” IN COLORADO** last June created one big devastating number: 54,000. That is how many acres were destroyed during the blaze, which lasted five months and also crippled the local economy in Durango and Silverton, Colo. Another number is coming up, and it could bring the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad to its knees. The U.S. Attorney’s Office in Denver has filed a lawsuit against the owner of the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, American Heritage Railways Inc., claiming the company caused the fire due to burning particles emitted



from an exhaust tack on a coal-burning steam engine locomotive. The U.S. Attorney's Office wants Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad to be held liable for all of the damages caused by the fire. The suppression of the fire alone cost \$25 million. "This fire caused significant damage, cost taxpayers millions of dollars, and put lives at risk," U.S. Attorney Jason Dunn said in a statement. "We owe it to taxpayers to bring this action on their behalf." (RA)

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**MASSACHUSETTS GOV.** Charlie Baker was among more than 40 politicians and government officials on hand Tuesday as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority held a groundbreaking ceremony for its long-awaited South Coast Rail expansion project. The project has been discussed for more than 25 years, and this was not the first time ground has been broken for the work to extend MBTA service to Fall River and New Bedford, Mass. But Baker noted that this time, the groundbreaking came as the extension has full funding and a completed construction plan. "Those are really the two big things it didn't have before," Baker said. "... And that basically guarantees it's going to happen." The state's five-year capital plan has allocated \$1 billion in funding for the project. The project will require reconstruction of 17.3 miles of track and upgrading of 7.1 miles of existing track, as well as the building of six stations and two layover facilities. Service is projected to begin in 2023. (TN)

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**CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC** Railroad is constructing two new premium carbodies at its Antonito, Colo., yard. With help from a Candelaria Foundation grant, the metal skeletons are starting to look like passenger cars. It takes about two years to build a passenger car, so this project is about half finished. C&TS is also beginning to upgrade the regular coach fleet and will be building six new coaches to replace old flat-top cars. C&TS is known for its passenger excursion trains between Chama, N.M., and Antonito, Colo. However, when the states of New Mexico and Colorado bought the 64-mile line in 1970, the only passenger cars that existed on the former Durango & Rio Grande Western were used on



the Durango-to-Silverton route. That left C&TS to build its own passenger cars. "For the first 10 years, passengers rode in converted boxcars," says Stathi Pappas, director of C&TS special projects. "We called them the P boxes, for passenger boxes. Starting in 1979, passenger cars were built on 6500 flatcar series frames. They were a major step up from the P boxes, but they didn't really encapsulate the look and feel of a historic passenger car. (TN)

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**AFTER MONTHS OF PLANNING**, the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum began moving equipment last month to the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum, as part of a recently-announced collaboration between the two 2-foot-gauge railroads. The first two pieces of equipment, Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad coach No. 16 and parlor car *Rangeley*, left their longtime home in Portland bound for Alna. Coach No. 16 will be delivered to Maine Locomotive & Machine Works (a private shop located along the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington main line) where it will be restored to operation and the *Rangeley*, the world's only 2-foot-gauge parlor car, will go to the WW&F. In the following days, more passenger cars, a caboose and two locomotives will follow. The move is the largest migration of 2-foot gauge equipment since 1993, when the Edaville Railroad collection returned home to Maine to help start the Maine Narrow Gauge on the Portland waterfront. Earlier this year, Maine Narrow Gauge and WW&F announced a new partnership to display some of the Portland group's equipment in Alna. Maine Narrow Gauge has been forced to vacate its museum space on the Portland waterfront and instead of putting the priceless equipment outside in the elements or in storage, it forged an agreement with the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington to display it in a newly-expanded carbarn. The equipment, much of which has been inside for years, will also be occasionally used on the WW&F. Executive Director Wesley Heinz says the partnership is a win-win for both museums. "There is growing culture of collaboration here in Maine," Heinz says. Heinz says Maine Narrow Gauge plans to continue offering excursions on the Portland waterfront for decades to come and in the coming months will break ground on a new station near downtown. The railroad also recently started leasing a warehouse in South Portland that it is using as its own restoration space. The movement of this equipment recognizes the depth of the

collaboration between the two museums announced early this year. The WW&F will provide display and storage of several of Maine Narrow Gauge's most historic cars in a new addition to its car barn, currently under construction, while the narrow gauge railroad and museum will retain ownership. In addition to the equipment displays, a number of exhibits developed by MNG will be moved to the enlarged space. With the arrival of these cars at Sheepscot, rolling stock that has not been in the same place in 95 years is reunited. WW&F steam locomotive No. 9 was originally a Sandy River locomotive, and three of the cars moved to the museum trace their ancestry to that fabled railroad. The opportunity to recreate a typical Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad passenger train is now a reality. (TN)

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**CANADIAN PACIFIC DOME CAR** *Selkirk* entered service with the railroads Heritage Fleet this summer after an extensive rebuilding. The ex-Southern Pacific dome was rebuilt in the former locomotive shop at Ogden Yard in Calgary under the supervision of Kevin Hryszak, senior manager of heritage operations, and Justin Tracy, manager of heritage operations and Mechanical. For its first trip, the car operated from Calgary to Banff and Golden and return. For several years CP had considered acquiring a dome for its Heritage Fleet, but the impetus to finally purchase the car came from Canadian Pacific President and CEO Keith Creel. Hryszak recalled after a trip in 2017 Creel asked what the train was missing, but before he or Tracy could say anything, Creel said "a dome car." The search then began for an appropriate dome which resulted in the purchase of ex-SP No. 3605 from Colorado's Royal Gorge Route Railroad. One reason for selecting the car was SP's domes were unique. Rather than having all seats immediately under the dome as most cars have, SP cars had two levels. At "ground" level there was a 20-seat lounge with the dome high overhead. Stairs then went from the lounge to the dome. "There isn't another type of car that has that open ceiling to it," Tracy says. SP's seven dome cars were designed by Frank H. Stengle Jr. and built by SP at its Sacramento Shops during 1954 and 1955. The railroad claimed that most dome cars were too tall to fit through its tunnels, so it designed and built its own domes out of older cars. They weren't full-length domes – the dome only ran three-quarters of the length of the car. They were built for service on the San Joaquin Daylight, Shasta Daylight, and the

San Francisco Overland, and were later used on the Coast Daylight and the City of San Francisco. Budd built the upper dome portions of the cars. At 15-feet, 2-inches tall, they had the shortest dome height of any dome car. The Canadian Pacific car was fabricated from SP tavern car No. 10312, built by Pullman Standard in 1937, and was outshopped in May 1955 for Shasta Daylight service. It became Amtrak No. 9374 in 1972, and was retired in 1981. It then went through a succession of owners before being sold in 2000 to the Royal Gorge Route where it ended up in storage when the railroad purchased three other full-length domes. (TN)

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**SX TRANSPORTATION TRAIN Q389-08** brings west the last of Amtrak's F40PHR locomotives and a lone P40. Amtrak's Delaware shops sold the units to Larry's Truck Electric earlier in the year, the sale marked the last of the F40s on Amtrak as well as the first P40 to go to a third party for scrap. (TN)

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**THE FAMED NEW ENGLAND**, Berkshire & Western Railroad (NEB&W) of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, NY, is moving to new quarters this year. The college has leased space off campus in a modern office building to ensure the model railroad can survive, grow, and have public access. This is because increased campus security had placed its former home in the basement of Davison Hall off limits to non-students, and because of a large renovation project that will remove asbestos insulation, and repair old water pipes located above the layout quarters. The unique NEB&W depicted Troy and other New York State communities in HO scale as they appeared in 1950 with astounding accuracy. The Rensselaer Model Railroad Society was formed in 1947, and moved to Davison Hall in 1972, where the NEB&W grew in size and reputation. The good news is that the new home at 258 Hoosick Street is larger and will not be chopped up with numerous walls. Already, the Railroad Society is planning expansion of the layout and other improvements. The layout



was removed in sections from campus and placed in temporary storage. Plans call for rebuilding to start in the new location this fall. (NER “Coupler”)

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**NEW JERSEY TRANSIT** is marking its 40th anniversary this month, and among other activities is rolling out six Multilevel “Heritage Coaches” decorated with the logos of several predecessor railroads that came together to form the agency’s 660-route-mile, statewide regional/commuter rail network—Pennsylvania Railroad, Central Railroad of New Jersey, Erie-Lackawanna, Conrail, Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines—and the agency that created NJT in 1979, the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Several NJT Rail Operations employees brought to the attention of senior staff that other railroads have adopted similar programs to honor their history. For example, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific both have Heritage Fleets consisting of modern diesel-electric locomotives in liveries that are contemporary interpretations of predecessor railroads. NJT’s Heritage Coach project was developed, at no extra cost to the



agency. The New Jersey Public Transportation Act of 1979 created New Jersey Transit Corporation to “acquire, operate and contract for transportation service in the public interest.” NJT brought together railroad, bus and light rail into a single agency. The six logos chosen to represent the history of NJT Rail Operations “each represents an operation with a unique history,” the agency notes. (RA)

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**“TRADITION ON THE TRACKS”**, an interesting and informative article about Edaville up to the present. The 250-acre site opened in 1947 and the largest “Thomas Land” in the world opened there on August 14, 2015. “Dinoland” is a part of the park with life-size dinosaurs; there are all kinds of rides from the “Cran-Central” astronaut ride to an old-fashioned ferris wheel, built in 1953. Along with the Edaville traditions, owner John Delli Priscoli said there are more things to come, such as a splash roller-coaster, a guided boat tour and go-karts. “That’s really the balance that we try to strike, the combination of yesterday and today,” Delli Priscoli said. (PL)

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**THE PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE** Association through Howard Wise and other volunteers have pulled off a miracle with the restoration of Southern Pacific German-built Krauss-Maffei Diesel-Hydraulic model ML-4000CC No. 9010. The locomotive debuted on the association’s Niles Canyon Railway Saturday. What began as a cosmetic restoration blossomed into an operational return when transmission(s) and geared truck(s) were located overseas and mated to the No. 2 (rear) engine, which was discovered to be serviceable after about 50 years of inactivity. The No. 1 engine suffered serious decay and is not planned to be made operable. (TN)



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**BROOKFIELD INFRASTRUCTURE’S** proposed acquisition of Genesee & Wyoming and its 106 American short line railroads is not on the fast track. The Surface Transportation Board, in a decision issued late last month, put an indefinite hold on the \$8.4-billion deal until it can weigh whether it’s appropriate to grant the normal exemption for an acquisition that does not involve two railroads, a Class I, or a deal that links rail lines. “The board is considering the issues presented here, including whether the class exemption is appropriate for this transaction,” the STB’s decision says. “To provide sufficient time for the board to fully consider the issues presented, the exemption that is the subject of this proceeding will not become effective until further order of the board.” Under U.S. law, railroad transactions fall into four categories: major, significant, minor, and exempt. Brookfield and G&W sought to have the transaction exempt from board review, as typically happens when a non-railroad company buys a railroad. The board’s decision is an indication that it may weigh in on a transaction involving the control of 13,000 miles of track in 41 states. “This isn’t really surprising,” says Todd Tranausky, a rail analyst with FTR Transportation Intelligence. “The exemption process was designed for small, straightforward cases.” There’s nothing small about G&W, he notes. (TN)



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**AMTRAK ANNOUNCED** on July 25<sup>th</sup> that it will offer a new service, *Acela Nonstop*, direct service between Washington, D.C. Union Station and New York Penn Station. The service will begin on Monday, September 23, and tickets are now available for purchase. The initial schedule for *Acela Nonstop* is weekdays only, with one southbound and one northbound train per day. The trip time will be two hours and 35 minutes. The southbound train will depart New York at 6:35 a.m., and will arrive in Washington at 9:10 a.m. The northbound train will depart Washington, D.C. at 4:30 p.m., and arrive in New York at 7:05 p.m. (RA)

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**HIGH-SPEED RAIL SERVICE** between Pittsfield and Boston — with up to 16 round-trip trains running every day along the Interstate 90 corridor — was among the options for linking western Massachusetts to Boston presented by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to a state advisory committee on Tuesday in Springfield. According to documents presented to the East-West Passenger Rail Study Advisory Committee, which is tasked with tracking the DOT's progress on the study, preliminary construction proposals range from mixed bus and train service to new tracks and high-speed rail. In all, the DOT presented six options to the advisory committee. The high-speed option could carry passengers from Springfield's Union Station to the capital in as little as 80 minutes on an electrified rail line, with trains reaching speeds up to 150 mph, the DOT said. State Sen. Eric Lesser, D-Longmeadow, called this option "a very exciting opportunity." Lesser, a member of the committee, said direct high-speed rail from Pittsfield to Boston would have a significant impact on economic conditions in all areas of the state. Lesser compared what he described as a lagging economy in western Massachusetts to the high cost of living in Boston. Efficient rail service, he said, could mitigate both of these problems by opening up easy movement between the two areas. "It would be a transformation for the entire state," Lesser said. However, this alternative does not include a stop in Palmer, which Lesser believes is crucial to any east-west railway. "It's a community that has fallen on hard times because the economy has changed," he said. "You could quickly see Palmer develop as a real hub for central and western Massachusetts with this rail service." Some of the alternatives do not propose full-service rail across the length of the state, with three alternatives calling for bus service

from Pittsfield to Springfield. Lesser said options that require commuters to take a bus do not go far enough. Commute times for the six proposals also vary, from the 80-minute Springfield-Boston commute to almost three hours for the same distance due to transfers in Worcester and a slower train. According to the documents, if there was no construction and east-west rail were to operate on existing infrastructure and service, trains could go as fast as 80 mph and take as long as 2½ hours to travel between Boston and Springfield. (Hampshire Gazette) "Pie-in-the-sky" IMHO-Ed.

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**SHORT LINE HOLDING COMPANY**

OmniTRAX will acquire the Winchester & Western, a 101-year railroad operating approximately 100 route-miles in Virginia, West Virginia, New Jersey, and Maryland. The \$105 million acquisition from Covia Holdings Corp. is expected to close during the third quarter of this year, subject to review from the Surface Transportation Board. Winchester & Western's Virginia Division includes 53 miles of track in the Shenandoah Valley and moves approximately 15,000 carloads per year. The 47 miles of its New Jersey Division, spread among four lines, moves approximately 11,000 loads per year. OmniTRAX currently operates 20 short lines in the U.S. and Canada. The Winchester & Western will be the easternmost property in its system. (TN)

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**THE CLASS I RAILROADS ADOPTING**

Precision Scheduled Railroading operating models say they are providing better service as they become more efficient. But disgruntled shippers tell a different story: They say they're paying the price for cutbacks in people and motive power that make railroads more profitable as service suffers. Railroad customers and their trade associations complained to Congress on Thursday during a shipper roundtable hosted by the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials. The two-hour forum was a one-sided affair, with no railroads invited to participate. Shippers say they understand and support the rail industry's need to become more efficient and more profitable in order to fund reinvestment in their networks. But PSR has gone too far, they say, and rewards investors to the detriment of customer service. Shippers also were critical of what they say is the rail industry's lack of collaboration and communication regarding PSR-related operational changes. "A combination of poor service and rising costs over the last few



years is not only unacceptable — it falls in the category of unimaginable,” says Mike Amick, a senior vice president at International Paper, the largest user of boxcars. (TN)

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**RICHMOND WILL HOLD** a “Wig Wags Forever” festival on Sunday, celebrating the restoration to operating condition of two of the nearly extinct grade-crossing protection devices. The signals, near 1 West Richmond Ave. at a grade crossing in Point Richmond, about 13 miles northwest of Oakland, remained in place after BNSF Railway replaced them with modern crossing gates, but have not operated for 18 years. But, after the community raised \$2,000 for their restoration, the signals were reactivated last month. That came following remarks by Richmond Mayor Tom Butt, during the festival held on the grounds of Mechanics Bank at 4 W. Richmond Ave. The festival featured music, food, and rail- and history-related exhibits. The bank is a restored former Santa Fe Railway building. (TN)

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**ONE OF SOUND TRANSIT’S** latest light rail projects is featuring what the transit agency says is a first-of-its kind rail line on a floating bridge. After more than a decade dealing with the technical challenges involved, the agency is installing tracks on the Interstate 90 bridge across Lake Washington as part of a route from Seattle to Bellevue and Overlake, Wash., scheduled to open in 2023. The most significant part of the engineering to make the project work are eight steel platforms, called “track bridges,” where the rails pass over the hinged joints of the highway bridge, which can rise or fall up to 2 feet depending on water levels, and also move because of wind, waves and traffic. The track bridges will allow the rails to stay in line even when the platforms move to accommodate the motion of the bridge, thanks to flexing bearings similar to those used to protect buildings from earthquake motion. Trains will be able to operate at 55 mph across the bridge. To offset the additional weight on the bridge from the rail line, concrete barriers along tracks are being replaced with cable fencing to prevent a derailed train from falling into the lake. (TN)

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**A COMPLETE UPGRADE** of the MBTA’s commuter rail system could cost up to \$33 billion, according to a study presented at last month’s MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board meeting. The presentation outlined three options:

— for an estimated \$33 billion (in 2030 dollars), full electrification of the MBTA system, expansion of South Station, and construction of the Grand Junction shuttle between Cambridge and Allston.

— For \$7.5 billion, electrification only of the route to Providence, expanding service on the Foxboro line, and operating diesel trains on other lines on 15-minute headways.

— For \$3.1 billion, expansion of the South Coast Rail project.

The costliest option would include replacement of the entire MBTA equipment fleet. It is also the only one to include South Station expansion, although that is expected to be needed under any improvement plan. (TN)

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**SHORT LINE RAILROAD COMPANY** New England Southern is going to keep its name ... for now. Las Vegas-based railroad consolidator United Rail was expected to buy the Concord, N.H., line, the state’s oldest, but the June 30 deadline for the sale is now expired. New England Southern President Peter Dearness broke the news and is only saying that the short line is still operational. The railroad carries freight on 73 miles of track from Concord to the north. United Rail wants to establish a presence in the east, but no one knows why the deal was ditched. Slurry is New England Southern’s most commonly hauled product. The railroad takes the product to a specialty paper mill operated by 3M. Paper mills, however, have dropped out of the economic equation over the years, with some of them preferring to go the trucking route. New England Southern attempted to start rail operations south of Concord, but in 2008 it lost a court fight with Pan Am Railway. New England Southern currently has two full-time employees, but at its peak there were 22 employees and the company hauled more than 2,400 yearly carloads. There are four short-line freight lines in the state of New Hampshire, which has approximately 443 miles of active tracks. (RA)

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**ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 4TH**, the 45th anniversary of Conway Scenic Railroad’s first revenue run, the railroad named steam locomotive No. 7470 after founder Dwight Smith. Conway Scenic President and General Manager David Swirk presided over a short naming ceremony. Smith purchased the Canadian National 0-6-0 in 1968 and in 1974 he founded the railroad with the heavy switcher as the heart and soul of the line. Over the decades, Conway Scenic has carried hundreds of thousands

of passengers, and locomotive 7470 has entertained countless visitors and is dearly loved by many people. Now it carries the name of the man who saved it and founded a railroad on which it could run. The locomotive recently returned after an overhaul that had it out of service since 2015. (TN)

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**GENESEE & WYOMING** is pulling out of Australia. The short line holding company is selling its 51% stake in its Australia operations, which serves New South Wales, the Northern Territory, and South Australia, including the 1,400-mile Tarcoola to Darwin rail line. The move comes as G&W is being taken private in an \$8.4-billion deal led by Brookfield Infrastructure Partners. G&W is selling its stake to its Australian partner, Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets, which held a 48.9% share of the partnership. (TN)

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**TRINITY INDUSTRIES** has developed an auto rack it says is designed for safer and more efficient loading. Trinity, which is involved in the manufacturing, leasing, and maintaining of railcars, introduced the car earlier this year, according to CEO Tim Wallace. The car, called Hourglass, has greater interior width and is designed for better ergonomics, Trinity officials say. "There's a safety issue," says Wallace, noting that the Hourglass allows crews to load pickup trucks by using a door of the vehicle, rather than the conventional method of being required to remove the rear window of the truck for access. (TN)

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**The Berkshire Flyer**, a two-year pilot program to provide "one seat" passenger service from New York City to Berkshire County in Massachusetts, will move ahead, as funding for the program was included in the state's budget signed into law Wednesday, July 31<sup>st</sup>. The program will receive "not less than \$270,000" for its inaugural year, set to begin in Spring 2020, according to a representative of state Sen. Adam Hinds, D-Pittsfield, who spearheaded the project. There is also \$30,000 set aside for a project manager, and \$100,000 earmarked for marketing the trains. The *Flyer* is expected to start as a seasonal, weekend train running between New York Penn Station and Pittsfield. The connection point would be Amtrak's Albany-Rensselaer, N.Y., station, where the north-south Empire Corridor connects with the east-west line to Boston. One train would run from New York to Pittsfield on Friday, and another would run the opposite way on Sunday.

The service would run from Memorial Day through Columbus Day weekends. A ticket is expected to cost about \$70 each way. (TN)

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**IT'S BEEN A BUSY YEAR** of expansion and improvements at the White Pass & Yukon Route. The hugely popular tourist railroad, based out of Skagway, Alaska, was sold on July 31, 2018, to a joint venture involving cruise line Carnival Corporation and Rail Management Services, an affiliate of Survey Point Holdings. The original 110-mile WP&YR, completed in 1900, provided freight



and passenger service between the Pacific Coast and Yukon mining territory until 1982. In 1988, it transformed into a tourist railroad, and currently operates on 67.5 miles of track from the seaport at Skagway inland to Carcross, Y.T. Nearly half a million tourists ride the scenic White Pass route each year between May and September, on narrow-gauge track that climbs almost 3,000 feet on a nearly 4% grade involving tunnels, steel bridges and timber trestles leading to panoramic views of glaciers, gorges and waterfalls. Bob Berto, President of the WP&Y had this to say: "One of our first acts as the new ownership group was to give the go-ahead on new track construction to enable White Pass to implement a new operating plan, based on the idea from our local management team. The additional track capacity allows for more frequent departures throughout the day, higher equipment utilization, lower terminal dwell time, helps spread traffic and allows us to increase ridership on the busiest days. In order to implement the plan, five miles of new sidings were constructed along with a new loop at the White Pass summit. Construction on the Summit Loop began as soon as the season ended in 2018, and we are happy to report that the new Summit Loop, Glacier Siding and Boulder Siding were completed and in service this spring. Other improvements included powered switches and welded rail. Engineering and construction management was done in-house, and



it is a huge tribute to our local workforce, management team, contractors and suppliers, in particular Cobalt Construction from Whitehorse and Hunz & Hunz from Skagway, that these projects were completed in time for the 2019 season in spite of rock, ice and snow. More track was laid from September of 2018 to May 2019 than any time since the completion of the railway 119 years ago. Regarding motive power, we have signed an agreement with National Rail Equipment (NRE) out of Mt. Vernon, Ill., to deliver two new E3000CC-DC model locomotives. The locomotives will include NRE 5650 trucks and GE764 motors and have 3300 H.P. EMD16-645 with the capability for a single engine to haul up to 16 of our passenger cars on tour. This locomotive is 65 feet long and weighs 265,000 pounds but integrates easily into our existing track structure and facilities, well within the AAR plate C clearance envelope. These will arrive in time for our 2020 season. Furthermore, we've signed a contract for construction of four new passenger cars to be delivered in spring of 2020 and initiated a multi-year program to overhaul our existing passenger car fleet (90 cars in total) including fresh siding and interior restoration. In addition to adding some new power to our fleet with NRE we are very excited to see the return of steam engine 73 [a Baldwin 2-8-2 built in 1947] to service. After an exhaustive 18-month overhaul, No.73, the Pride of the White Pass Fleet, was put back into service on July 15. The locomotive was stripped down to its basic elements and work included a refurbished boiler, rebuilt running gear and redesigned cab. She is running excursions three times a week with round trip service to the Fraser Meadow Loop". (RA)



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**FEDERAL PROSECUTORS** have filed a lawsuit against the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad accusing the Colorado tourist railroad of starting a massive wildfire last summer that burned for months and torched more than 53,000 acres.

The government is seeking about \$25 million from the D&SNG and its parent company, American Heritage Railways, to help cover the costs of fighting the 416 Fire. According to court documents, fire investigators with the U.S. Forest Service found that the fire was sparked by a hot cinder from one of the D&SNG's daily excursion trains. (K. Linagen)

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**CANADIAN NATIONAL (CN)** and CSX will join together and serve more of the northeast starting Oct. 7. The two Class 1s announced a new intermodal service offering between CN's greater Montreal & Southern Ontario areas and the CSX-served ports of Philadelphia, New York, New Jersey and the New York City metropolitan area. "Over the long term, the freight market will increasingly depend on demand driven by the consumer economy and the rail industry must create new intermodal services that can successfully rival the over-the-road options," says JJ Ruest, president and chief executive officer at CN. "This interline service fits perfectly with our strategic focus on feeding our unique network through organic and inorganic growth opportunities, including extending our reach into new geographic markets." (RA)

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**ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN** private cars of the late 20th century, the former Amtrak office car 10000, which was used by the passenger railroad's presidents, is for sale. Railroad equipment brokerage firm Ozark Mountain Railcar has listed the car for sale from an unidentified private owner. The 65-year-old Wabash-built office is listed for \$40,000. "It needs a lot of work, but it's got very good bones," says Ozark's John Susheck. "It's got its 1970s interior that would probably need to be updated, but it's a very savable car." Wabash's Decatur, Ill., shops built car *Adolphus* in 1954 for the Anheuser-Busch company. It features one stateroom, two bedrooms, a secretary's room, and crew quarters. The car sleeps eight people. Anheuser-Busch sold the car in the 1960, the listing says, and it was later owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central, and private car owner Bill Kratville of Omaha, who leased it to Amtrak for executive train use. During its career, the listing says, the car was used by President Gerald Ford during whistle stop tour events in 1980. The car was a regular on special trains, and Amtrak President W. Graham Claytor Jr., used it to kickoff state-supported additions to the network in the early and mid-1980s. (TN)

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**STEADY POPULATION** and economic growth along the southern coast of Maine is creating new opportunities for more passenger trains with more connections to more communities. Currently, Maine has but one rail passenger service: the *Downeaster*, which makes five daily roundtrips between Boston and Brunswick. Inaugurated Dec. 15, 2001, initially running only as far north as Portland, the Amtrak-operated service carried 540,000 riders in fiscal year 2018. Beyond the *Downeaster's* route, Mainers must rely on driving or a regional bus network. "I think the time has come to look at alternative mass transit to help get people around," says Patricia Quinn, executive director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority. The agency was formed in 1995 and is chartered to develop and manage passenger rail to and within the state of Maine. Funding comes from fare revenue, federal sources and the Maine Department of Transportation. The Portland metropolitan area, home to 535,000, has grown 4.1% since 2010. Driven by tourism, financial services, education and health care, the region accounts for more than half the state's economy. Its unemployment rate of 2.3% is among the lowest in the nation. For several years, local rail advocates have been pining for train service to Lewiston-Auburn, two adjacent cities about 35 miles north of Portland. The agency released a passenger rail service plan in May, building on a study of travel patterns issued last year. The service plan identifies three potential routes, with projected costs to start and operate this potential new service. Diesel multiple-unit equipment would service Lewiston-Auburn, connecting with the *Downeaster* either at Portland or Yarmouth. The latter option would require a new station and an added stop for the *Downeaster*, and is considered primarily a cost-saving step toward an eventual Portland connection. One option is to use Pan Am Railways' freight mainline to Lewiston, which currently carries six to eight freight trains a day. NNEPRA envisions double-tracking the line to handle up to 30 daily passenger trains. Existing Class 2 trackage would need to be upgraded to Class 4 to allow 80 mph passenger operations and installation of positive train control would be required. The state of Maine also owns 178 miles of inactive railroad rights-of-way, including trackage that parallels Pam Am for part of the route to Auburn, across the Androscoggin River from Lewiston. Although it hasn't seen service since

2015 and was only maintained to Class 1 standards, that's another option. A third alternative would enter Portland by way of a now-abandoned right-of-way, requiring replacement of a burned-out, over-water wooden bridge and trestle. It would then follow the right-of-way currently used by the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad and terminate at the city's cruise ship terminal. The only possible connection to the *Downeaster* would be at Yarmouth. However, that route would impede on a popular park and walking trail in Portland that is a designated historic landscape district. That would likely lengthen the permitting process and arouse the ire of park users and local residents. (TN)

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**AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS** of construction, Wollaston Station reopened at the start of Red Line service on Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. Prior to its closure, Wollaston was the last of 22 stations on the Red Line that was not ADA compliant, according to MBTA officials. The station closed in January 2018 for a \$36 million renovation project, which sought to make public transportation accessible for disabled riders. Following Wollaston's renovations, the Red Line became the first fully accessible train line for the MBTA, officials said. New improvements, including three elevators, two escalators and additional walking paths, addressed those issues. New bathrooms and energy-efficient lighting were also added. (BG)

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**GOOD NEWS FROM** Northwest Short Line (NWSL) that an employee will be taking over the business from the owners, who retired earlier this year. All back-orders and future orders will be filled. The line is expected to carry forward largely unchanged although the company will no longer offer phone support. NWSL will be headquartered in Kila, Montana and the new address is PO Box 219, Kila, MT 59920. Email contact is through the website. (Ross Kudlick).

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**THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION** (FRA) has awarded more than \$272 million in grants to 10 passenger rail projects in as many states. The funding is provided through FRA's Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program (SOGR Program), and will help to repair and rehabilitate railroad infrastructure around the country. The SOGR Program provides funding to repair, replace or rehabilitate publicly or Amtrak-owned or -controlled railroad equipment, infrastructure and facilities. It aims to improve



intercity passenger rail performance. Eligible projects include upgrading infrastructure such as track, switches, bridges and highway-rail grade crossings; stations; and equipment, including passenger cars. In New England:

*Massachusetts Department of Transportation*

The proposed project will replace and upgrade signals, switches, track, power systems, and related infrastructure at Tower 1 interlocking, a major rail network junction at the entrance to the Boston South Station terminal area. The current interlocking is a major source of delay at a location used by almost 60,000 daily rail passengers. The project provides resiliency benefits to protect Tower 1 from the risk of flooding and providing redundant power systems in the event of power loss. Operability through the interlocking will be enhanced via upgrading the interlocking signal and communication systems to more technologically advanced systems.

*Rhode Island Department of Transportation*

The proposed project will complete a major rehabilitation of the Amtrak-owned 33-year-old Providence Station in Providence, RI, to adequately prepare for its continued future use. Providence Station serves 1.4 million annual intercity and commuter rail passengers, ranking it among the highest ridership stations in the Amtrak and MBTA networks. An interior rehabilitation will replace and repair assets, replace assets with assets that increase capacity and provide a higher level of service, including expanding the building's footprint to the west and repurposing existing space, removing an external planter wall to open the station's western entrance, improving ticketing and baggage operations, expanding restroom size, upgrading the public-address system with visual displays, updating interior wayfinding signage, and increasing safety for pedestrian access to the station. The project will coincide with the completion of a bus facility to the south that will revive the intermodal connection that existed between the rail and bus terminals 30 years ago.

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**SINCE THE 1970S**, Amtrak's *Adirondack* would stop each day at the border crossing between the United States and Canada as customs officers made their way through, interviewing every passenger and examining luggage and identification papers. Depending on the number of passengers and what officers found, the process could lengthen the trip by an hour or more. A new

agreement promises to shift customs procedures to Montreal's Central Station, eliminating the border stop, and allowing trains to arrive and depart without delays. The agreement — in the works for more than five years — finally took effect last Thursday. Now the work to build, and pay for, a secure facility at Montreal Central Station begins. Passengers shouldn't expect that to happen immediately. Garry Douglas, president and CEO of the North Country Chamber of Commerce in Plattsburgh, expects it take at least two years, and that's a best-case scenario. (Albany Times-Union)

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**NEW YORK STATE** officials are continuing with their efforts to tear out part of the Adirondack Scenic Railroad's tracks to create a rail trail. Two state agencies have issued a document defining the scope of the project and are formally requesting public comment. The plan would include the "removal of rails and ties for the creation of a rail trail along the 34-mile segment of the Corridor from Tupper Lake to Lake Placid, with 85 miles of the Corridor south of Tupper Lake to be upgraded for train service", according to the document which also outlines possible benefits and adverse impacts from the work. An earlier attempt by the State to remove the state-owned tracks came to a halt in 2017, when a lawsuit filed by the railroad resulted in a judge ruling that the land in question was defined as a travel corridor. Under the then state definition, this meant only a railroad or a highway could be located there. The Adirondack Park Agency, which oversees the land in question, voted last December to amend the definition of travel corridor to include rail trail. (RRE) Does anyone else feel that the "rails to trails" movement has gone too far in some instances? What a shame to make it so that no trains will ever go to Lake Placid again. Remember when there were special trains for the Winter Olympics there?

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**INVESTIGATORS ARE TRYING TO DETERMINE** why two CSX Transportation trains collided earlier this month in Ohio on a line protected by positive train control, the multibillion-dollar safety system designed to prevent collisions. The probe by the Federal Railroad Administration and CSX includes an examination of the proper activation, operation, and functioning of PTC on the territory as well as any human factors that may have contributed to the Aug. 12 wreck. PTC was active on the line at the time of the predawn collision near Carey, Ohio, on CSX's former Chesapeake & Ohio route between

Columbus and Toledo, according to people familiar with the matter. (TN)

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**WORK ON B&O 2-6-6-2** No. 1309 at the Western Maryland Scenic RR has come to a halt as funding for the project has run out once more. Work stopped after the Diversified Rail Services crew installed the drivers into the front engine last week. “We need to raise the remaining funds so the contractor can come back,” Executive Director John Garner said recently. A last remaining part for the rear engine, a driving box, must be purchased from a foundry at a cost of \$39,000, then machined and installed. At that time, the boiler can be set on both engines and final piping and assembly can move forward. A crane company has offered to donate the lift. Once on its wheels, there’s eight to 12 weeks of work to get the engine ready for testing. Hampering the effort has been the 2018 employee theft of running gear parts and the overall condition of the locomotive when it was acquired in 2014. The parts theft complicated running gear repairs — the stolen brass was valued at the price of scrap, but the new parts must be carefully crafted and machined for fit and heavy use at great expense. (TN)

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

## JULY

### TRAINS

Amtrak’s Last Transcons

Big Boy Resurrection

Passenger

VIA’s Summer Shuffle

### RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

East Stroudsburg Tower

DL&W

Central Vermont Milk Cars in HO

### MODEL RAILROADER

A Buyer’s Guide to DCC Systems

The Modeler’s Guide to Covered Grain Hoppers

Step by Step

Replacing cracked gears on a loco

## AUGUST

### TRAINS

Twilight of the Iron Rooster

Extra 4014 East

A Railroad Reborn

Central Maine & Quebec RR

Senior Citizen Locomotives

GP30s

### RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Model a Remote Interlocking

Look Both Ways

Bigger is Better

Test Track

Field System by Woodland Scenics

### MODEL RAILROADER

Adding Depth to your Backdrops

Build a Steel Truss Arch Bridge

DCC Corner

Keeping Digitrax Equipment Up-to-Date

### PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL

A Passenger Special Like No Other

“Big Boy” Steam Locomotive

Building the Future: Amtrak’s Acela II Trains

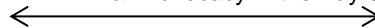
Rails Around the Northeast

Leisure Rail

Make No Assumptions

Rail Users’ Network

Rail Advocacy in the Bay State



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains Newswire, Railway Age, Progressive Railroading, Railpace, RRE “Callboy”, “The 470”, Patriot Ledger, Wall Street Journal, The Sun Chronicle, New York Times, Cape Cod Times.

## EDITOR’S NOTES

1. This month is my **40<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of membership in the SSMRC. It’s been quite a ride, all started by Bob Walsh inviting me to the Club and sponsoring me!
2. We had two nice visits from groups last month. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, 30 participants and 30 teachers from the “**SNAP**” program, sponsored by the South Shore Country Club, had a great time watching trains running. Thanks to the 11 members who showed up to operate. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, the “**IEXCEL**” students from **Scituate High** visited, making this their “second annual” visit, as they had such a good time last year that they thought it worthwhile to bring the students back. There were 20 students and 10 counselors. These folks again presented us with a nice donation, for which we are grateful and I’m grateful for the 8 member-operators, who showed off our beautiful railroad.

3. 14 Members enjoyed a beautiful, hot, summer day at Jim & Alice's house and pool for our 27<sup>th</sup> annual "**Cookout and Pool Party**". The food, drink and company, along with the shimmering, refreshing 85° water, made it a great time, as usual. Friend Kevin Linagen showed pictures he had taken during the past seven months (including some "extras" he threw in for good measure and laughs) and then Paul III showed some great historical color pictures of the New Haven RR. Since becoming an editor and publisher of some of the Historical Society publications, he now has access to hundreds of archived photos. Fun was had by all and if you didn't make it this year, please consider making it a "must do" for next year!
4. "**Dining for a Cause**" at the "99 Restaurant", across from the Hingham Shipyard, seemed to be well-attended by Members and their family and friends. The late afternoon started off with a T-storm and a heavy downpour,



which stopped after about 15 minutes. As usual, you can't go wrong with a "99" meal and it seemed everyone went home happy and satisfied. We get 15% of the total spent on food and drink by those who presented the SSMRC coupon and we get to publicize the Club and our "Summer Open House", which was three days away. Special thanks to Chip Mullen (in the background of photo) for letting us use one of his gorgeous dioramas! We made \$182.67 this year...not bad for costing us \$0. Thanks to all those who came and supported us!

5. **Welcome back**, if you have been away from the Club on vacation. If you have any rail news from what you saw or heard on vacation, please share through the newsletter. All news and articles are welcome.
6. The new **Committee Sign-up Sheet** is posted on the Bulletin Board. Please take a moment to peruse all the committees and chose ones you'd like to assist and/or learn from.

..... *David N. Clinton*

"We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love." (Mother Teresa)

## MEMBER NEWS

Our condolences to **Savery Moore**, on the death of his wife Jan earlier this month. Our prayers and thoughts are with you at this time, Savery.

**Bill Garvey** continues to recuperate from his foot operation at the Brockton VA. We look forward to your speedy return, Bill!

Welcome to our newest applicant **Andrew Gilmartin** of Scituate. Hope to get to know you during your applicant period.

Note: The "Health & Welfare Committee" (Ye Ed.) would like to hear of any member who is ill or hospitalized, so that we can help "cheer them up" and keep their fellow members advised.

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations on their special day:

Jack Foley ..... 13<sup>th</sup>  
Ralph Weischedel ..... 27<sup>th</sup>





## **RUNNING EXTRA**

### **Dukakis, Gunn share concerns about makeup, objectives of current Amtrak board**

*Trains Magazine* by [Bob Johnston](#) | July 25, 2019

WASHINGTON — Former Democratic presidential candidate and Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis remembers his time on the Amtrak Board of Directors as working with people well-versed in transportation and “committed to the simple but powerful notion that the entire country needs a first-class rail passenger system.” Former Amtrak president and CEO David Gunn similarly remembers the board he worked with as being an intelligent group with backgrounds in transportation. Both men have concerns about the current nature of the Amtrak board.

The Senate Commerce Committee held a confirmation hearing Wednesday on the Trump Administration’s latest nominee for the Amtrak board, former U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita (R-Ind.). Rokita voted for unsuccessful efforts to cut Amtrak funding through budget amendments in 2011, 2015, and 2017. Three of the president’s previous nominees, Joseph Gruters, Rick Dearborn, and Leon Westmoreland, were submitted for confirmation in 2018 and resubmitted this year but yet to be confirmed because U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) has put a hold on all of their confirmations.

Moran and other GOP and Democratic senators from Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico have assumed an activist, oversight role ever since Amtrak’s management last year attempted substitute bus service for part of the *Southwest Chief*.

All of President Donald Trump’s proposed board members are politically engaged Republicans with no transportation experience; Westmoreland, a former Georgia congressman, voted for two of the same “defund Amtrak” amendments as Rokita.

Dukakis, now a college political science professor who splits teaching between Northeastern University and UCLA, tells *Trains News Wire* the Amtrak Board he served on “was bipartisan by agreement. I don’t think any of us bought into the idea that Amtrak would pay for itself; we never talk

about highway (losses), right? We have to serve all parts of the country, and in any event, we have an infrastructure deficit, and that means public funding (to fix it). The board I served on was quite unified around that notion.” He says, “Whether it’s (Amtrak’s) state corridors, Northeast Corridor, or the national network, the money is certainly all coming from the same place. Highways, trains, and airports are all public resources of a national transportation system that deserves support. “It’s a question of what you think your priorities are,” Dukakis continues. “Don’t get me started on the size of the defense budget and what’s going on there — it’s just preposterous. My prescription, get us a new president and a congress that supports a strong passenger rail system and let’s go to work!”

Gunn, meanwhile, tells *Trains News Wire*, “I was lucky when I went to Amtrak because I had Mike Dukakis, John Robert Smith [now Chairman of Transportation for America], Gov. Linwood Holton [Republican from Virginia] and a very smart guy, Michael Jackson, who was the Department of Transportation representative, on the Board.”

As the board’s acting chairman in 2002, Dukakis made the phone call to then-retired Gunn in Nova Scotia, urging him to take the Amtrak job. They became friends when Gunn ran Boston’s Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

Gunn recalls that when he was CEO that Jackson, the DOT representative, “wasn’t a pro-Amtrak guy but he believed in honesty, telling the truth and getting things done. He would give you a heads up if you were getting on thin ice [with the George W. Bush Administration] and when you weren’t — he was good at that. Jackson wouldn’t fit in today,” Gunn quips. But Gunn warns, “Politically appointed boards are worthless and dangerous if they bring nothing to the party.” Gunn is especially concerned now because following management buyouts over the last two years, Amtrak lacks employees and managers who know, understand, and appreciate railroad practices—what works and what doesn’t.

“It’s very sad what’s going on now at Amtrak — the institutional knowledge is almost destroyed. And the people being nominated (to the board) to oversee them are, at best, lazy politicians.”



In Wednesday's hearing, Rokita defended his votes against Amtrak funding by saying his vote "sent a message" to Amtrak about fiscal responsibility, but that he favors a robust passenger train system. In response to a question from Committee chairman Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Rokita said keeping a national system was a priority and that he had "no preconceived notions to eliminate" any trains.

No action was taken on the nomination. Committee members will be given time to submit more questions to Rokita in writing before voting on his nomination.

## HERE

### SUMMER SAVINGS ON THE DOWNEASTER TRAIN

Travel between Boston's North Station and Brunswick, Maine, on the Amtrak Downeaster and you can read a book, work, or enjoy the scenery instead of dealing with traffic and parking. Summer deals include the Train to Maine BOGO promotion, when you can take a friend for half price when you buy one adult full-fare ticket (use promo code v158, good for travel on train numbers 681, 683, 688, 691, 693, and 698) and the Discover Maine Rail Pass, which gets you 10 one-way trips on the Downeaster between any Maine stations within a seven-day period for just \$19 per person. Or take the number 685 train between Haverhill and Brunswick or points in between for \$5 one way. Specials must be booked in advance and run through Sept. 30. Anyone 65 and older, between 2 and 12, or with disabilities get half off one-way fares year-round. The train includes free Internet and a cafe serving snacks and beverages. 800-872-7245, [www.amtrakdowneaster.com](http://www.amtrakdowneaster.com)



## The Broadway Limited comes to the end of the line

By GARY A. WARNER  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

An old friend passed away this month at age 93, after a long illness. The Broadway Limited died Sept. 10, a victim of Amtrak's grim triage of a national passenger rail system beset by government neglect and public disaffection.

By the time I made the Broadway Limited's acquaintance in the early 1980s, the famous New York-Chicago train was already in steep decline. Little but the fancy name remained from the time when it defined luxury travel.

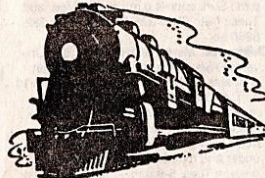
There was no on-board barber to trim my beard or personal maid to press my suit. The once-great library filled with Shakespeare's poetry and Thoreau's essays had been reduced to dog-eared copies of Amtrak's passenger magazine.

But returning home to Pennsylvania from New York City, the Broadway Limited was still a step above the other nameless trains plying the "Main Line" through the Keystone State. There was the rare luxury of a dining car where I could enjoy a hot meal on real plates as the Amish farm country rolled by.

The Wright brothers were a year away from their triumph at Kitty Hawk and the automobile an undependable smoke-belching toy when the Pennsylvania Special left New York for the first time in 1902.

Soon renamed the Broadway Limited, it was the pride of the

### COMMENT



politically powerful Pennsylvania Railroad, one of a handful of powerful railroads that dominated all passenger travel and cargo hauling in the United States.

In its heyday between the two world wars, the Broadway Limited was a luxury liner, jet airplane and long-haul truck rolled into one. For anyone of refinement traveling between New York and Chicago, there was no real choice except the rails.

Passengers on the all-sleeping car Broadway Limited could make the 900-mile trip between the nation's two largest cities in a then-brisk 20 hours. By the late 1940s, the trip was down to less than 16 hours and the train sometimes reached speeds of up to 100 miles per hour in the flat farm country of eastern Pennsylvania.

The trains dripped amenities, fashioning themselves the rolling

equivalent of the Waldorf-Astoria: art-deco trimmings, famous chefs serving haute cuisine, and Pullman porters available at the push of a button.

By the early 1950s, the railroads had competition. The turnpike system had reduced a comfortable drive between New York and Chicago to just over a day. Airlines offered safe, dependable service on pressurized propeller aircraft that took just a few hours to make the trip.

In 1967, the Pennsylvania Railroad took the unthinkable step of adding coach cars to attract the less-well-heeled traveler willing to sleep upright.

When Washington gathered the remnants of the great passenger railways into Amtrak in the 1970s, the Broadway Limited was shorn of all luxury trappings save its dining car and evocative name.

Floating in \$240 million of red ink this year, Amtrak took a hard look at its most unprofitable lines and killed the Broadway Limited, effective Sept. 10. Passengers between New York and Chicago must now change trains in Pittsburgh with a two-hour layover or take the longer northern Lake Shore Limited route via Rochester, Buffalo and Cleveland.

In the end, the Broadway Limited was a victim of a vicious Catch-22. Congress says it won't give Amtrak more subsidies because it is losing passengers and money. Amtrak says it can't attract riders unless it gets money to buy better

engines and cars and repair stations and railbeds.

The near future likely will add more names to the death list of once-great trains. The Southwest Chief, City of New Orleans, California Zephyr, Empire Builder, Coast Starlight and Desert Wind are all in the crosshairs of congressional budget snipers.

Some would like to pull the plug on the entire \$1.4 billion Amtrak budget, saying the federal government has no business running a railroad. Many of these same lawmakers think nothing of spending millions on air-traffic control, airport construction and interstate highways.

The United States is the only advanced nation seriously discussing killing off its passenger rail travel. In Europe and Japan, railroads receive large subsidies because governments believe railroads are important to the economy and the quality of travel of its citizens.

While France builds an ultra-high-speed TGV rail network and is a partner in a rail tunnel under the English Channel, Amtrak struggles with 30-year-old passenger cars, ancient diesel engines and crumbling stations.

It's too late for the Broadway Limited. But here's a question worth pondering: The annual price of subsidizing Amtrak is equal to that of two B-2 stealth bombers. Which does the nation need more? □

September 10, 1995





# THE OPERATOR



AUG. 12 & 15/19

ECL OPERATING DEPARTMENT

NO. 184



ALL STEAM NIGHT



## OPERATIONS REVIEW

by Paul A. Cutler III

Welcome to All Steam Night! For the first time in a long while, all the diesels (and electrics) were removed from the layout. All motive power was replaced by steam and we got to see some rare models run for a change.

### Operations Review: Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup> 2019

The tower was staffed by **Will Baker** on the Boston Division and yours truly on the Mountain Division.

Things didn't start or run very smoothly. As usual, after a 3-month pause in operations, skills became rusty and the Monday operation suffered.

**Al Munn** ran six trains as an engineer. When asked how the operation went, **Al** replied, "It sucked." His first train, #101, was actually on time, but nothing else was. It was a long, frustrating night with a few derailments thrown in. For example, Train 716, the LV *John Wilkes*, derailed on E-57 at White River Jct. After picking up the two cars, **Al** backed up to re-couple, went forward and derailed the same cars again on E-57. Did I mention that two other passenger trains were stopped and waiting for him to move? At this point, I told him to just Bad Order the cars and proceed, which he did.

Trainmaster **Bob Farrenkopf** says that all trains were run including the Extra. He reportedly got some push-back from what he called the "diesel weenies," who complained about their motive power, but that they calmed down after a while. ☺ **Bob** said he gave out two trains in a row to the same engineer, something he's not seen before (me either). In the time it took for a short commuter run, the other three engineers were all tied up at the derailment(s) at White River Jct. (see above). Oh, and he learned it was easier for us to call him when his radio was turned on. ☺

Up in Cedar Hill, **Skip Burton** tried his hand at HX-4, the in-yard local freight for the first time. He said he didn't get a lot done (unsurprising being his first time), but that he had fun trying to figure things out. He said the NH 0-8-0 he was using ran well.

**Dan Peterson** operated eight steamers during the night, seven of which were late. On HB-2, the CV 2-10-4 reefer train, he had a high-low coupler situation where the tender uncoupled from the train three times. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> uncoupling (near the Dairy), he tried to swap cars with one that looked better, but when he picked up one car, the bottom dropped out. **Dan** then tried to reassemble it on the mainline (next time, just Bad Order the car, please). Also, **Dan** (with

MB-4) held up Train 43 leaving Boston after he threw E-21 (without dispatcher approval) and entered Boston. "Oops!" **Dan**.

Engineer **Dave Clinton** had Fireman **Jacob "Jake" Gibson** as a trainee. They ran five trains together and then **Dave** cut him loose to solo on the sixth train. While **Jacob** ran 547, **Dave** ran the Extra. **Jake** says they were late all night...because of **Dan**. ☺☺☺ *Ooo, burn!* On the ore train, LM-4, there were some shorting going on. It's possible that the metal wheels are shorting on the underframe of various cars (we'll have to red-washer each car, I guess).

Our final engineering duo was **Rick Pearson** and **Adam Nagle**. They, like everyone else, had one on-time train and the rest were all late. Their biggest struggle of the night was with #34, the Amtrak steam train (yes, Amtrak). "That train was hell," said **Adam**. The main culprit was dirty wheels (the owner swears he cleaned them before the operation), but running into and derailing on some loose scenery in Middleton didn't help. In the re-railing process, one of the knuckle springs on a Superliner disappeared, which further delayed them. Then, after making it around to Minot Jct., the engine derailed at the crossovers. Train 34 arrived in Boston 90 min. late, which wasn't helped by stopping at stations not on the Train Order. After colliding with BX-7 at Richmond Mills, **Rick** also said that the Erie 4-6-2 on train 29 needed a push up the hill at West Middleton, and that a truck on the ECL coach "collapsed" as it entered Middleton. Basically, the old truck sideframes are so worn out that a set of wheels came out of the journals (the car was Bad Ordered). **Adam** summed it up by saying, "It was a good night to work in the yard." ☺

We had a new train tonight: BX-7. It used to be called MX-2 but to free up valuable space in Middleton we've changed the job so that it comes out of Boston instead. **Chris Barlow** is the first to take her out for a spin. This is also the first time that the freight house in Bryant City got switched during an operation. First, **Chris** left Boston on the wrong main, meaning he had to back up to E-22 (read those Train Orders, folks!). Then he found the Bryant City kill switch was off, he had to pull over at Minot Jct. to let **Dan** by and crossed back over at Ruggles. While switching Richmond Mills, **Chris** did hold up Train 29 for a bit (after getting hit by said train), but quickly cleared up into Essex Jct. Adding to all this, his radio headset didn't work. Lastly, **Chris** apparently didn't want to run his 2-8-2's backwards all the way to Boston, so instead of running to Middleton to take a ride on the turntable, they magically were lifted into the air and turned in Essex Jct. Yard. ☺

**David Galbraith** ran HX-1 down in Larson for the first time. When asked how it went, he said, "Great." And he



wasn't being sarcastic. He did so well, he not only finished early he then grabbed a mainline train (533) and ran that, too! **Dave** said, "No problems!" When we all laughed, he said, "Am I supposed to have problems?" ☺

**Savery Moore**, the Cedar Hill Stationmaster, said, "If I put down all the times in Central Time, it would have been a lot better." And it's true; most trains were an hour late. No real problems, but he complained that two steam engines didn't have operable front couplers. This made turning cars with markers on the turntable a long process...so **Savery** turned them by hand (meh; in real life, the crew would have just picked up the markers and carried them to the other end of the car).

On the freight side of things in Cedar Hill, **Fred Lockhart** said that only one train was on time: HX-1. Everything else was late. He did get two of the mainline trains turned; the last arrived after 1800 hours so it wasn't turned.

Down in Middleton, **Bryan Miller** and **Jack Foley** held down the fort as yardmasters. **Bryan's** reaction, "I learned a lot." ☺ The one major infraction was when **Jack** called for E-2 Red for **Al Munn's** HM-4, which we did. Minutes later, **Jack** called for E-2 Green, which we did...right under **Al's** train resulting in a multi-car derailment. "Oops!" **Jack**.

**Will Baker**, Boston Dispatcher, said that we got off to a slow start and it never got better. Radio comms were okay, but engineers should change channels as written on the Train Orders. Oh, and **Will's** job would be easier if he had a computer that would communicate with the railroad.

On the Mountain Div., **yours truly** was Chief Dispatcher. We had the usual rust issues: radios that didn't work, hot mics, forgetting kill switches, etc. The steam ran much better than feared, with only one train needing a push up the hill. While it was frustrating to be late all night long, it wasn't boring. However, with just four engineers for most of the night, we were never able to catch up after our slow start.

### Operations Review: Monday, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> 2019

So remember how on Monday we had all kinds of problems caused by having just four engineers? Yeah, that wasn't the issue on Thursday. We had eight, yes, eight engineers. But as a counterpoint, all five yard workers we had on Monday were not present for Thursday. I swear, you just can't win. ☺

**Dan Peterson** ran five freights. He had one derailment leaving Boston and he lost a coupler off a caboose (which he just turned around to complete the run). **Dan** has already fixed the coupler...but after the run, this time. ☺

**Al Munn** operated four trains. Train 100 derailed two cars leaving Cedar Hill. BH-1 had a late start, dropped a coupler off a car on the lift bridge, and then needed a push up the grade at West Middleton. **Al** got in about 30 min. late at Cedar Hill, mostly due to dirty wheels.

**Will Baker** had five freights to his credit, and said that everything ran very well. Four of his trains were on time or even early. Only **Will's** last train was late, by just 13 min.

**Rick Pearson** had a three-man crew with **Adam Nagle** and our guest from North Carolina, **Aidan**. They ran,

collectively, five trains. The first three trains by **Rick** were on time then he had one train run by **Adam** and the next by **Aidan**. They reported they had one low glad hand on a car that was Bad Ordered in Middleton.

**Al Taylor** dusted off his mainline engineer's license and ran three trains. He had a couple derailments leaving Middleton, and said that the timing of his last train was too tight for little 2-6-0's pulling passengers. Also, **Al** reported that the B&M 2-8-4 was running awfully slow from Middleton to Great Lakes on ML-1 (the owner has been notified).

**Dave Clinton** ran just two trains...both of his own equipment. He had to use several paper towels to clean the wheels of his Amtrak steam engine Monday night because they were so filthy, but once clean the engine ran well. For the other train, he ran his SP&S Challenger on the Extra. **Dave** got around the layout without issue. One issue **Dave** reported on the layout is a dead spot on the mainline between the diamond at West Middleton and the switch for the West Middleton Freight House. Other engineers also had trouble there as well.

**Ed Carter** ran three passenger trains. He reported no issues with them other than a slight stall leaving the yard. All three were on time.

**Peter Palica** ran two trains. Due to a dispatcher being out of his tower, **Peter** ran Train 502 out of East Middleton on the wrong mainline. Fortunately, the absent dispatcher was walking by and directed **Peter** to take the crossover at E-18 in Essex Jct. to get on the correct track and avoid a future head-on collision.

In Middleton Yard, I stuck **David Galbraith** in as Yardmaster and (if he was bored) MX-3. He was going to run HX-3 in Larson, but I asked if he would take on MX-3 instead as I had no one else to run the yard. **Dave** had never been in Middleton before, but he learned pretty fast. He said he had a good time and had fun working a new place. But he had some weird throttle problems with his throttle. If he plugged in his DT500D, it wouldn't throw mainline switches. But if he unplugged, it would...but the screen would soon fade out as if the brand new battery was dead. Switching batteries didn't change anything, so I had to hand him a spare throttle which worked fine, both plugged in and wirelessly. Then **Dave Clinton** used **David's** throttle to run trains on the mainline and it worked perfectly. That's just weird.

Over in Cedar Hill, I asked my father, **Paul Cutler, Jr.**, to run Cedar Hill Stationmaster while he also switched cars on HX-4. **Dad** said that all trains left on time, but whoever set up the session misplaced Train 734 on track 5 when it should have been on track 6. This caused a little confusion when 701 came in, but this was easily fixed. He did finish all the pick-ups in Cedar Hill except for the Car Shop.

Trainmaster **Bob Farrenkopf** handed out all orders, and reported there was no whining about steam tonight. ☺

As Chief Dispatcher, we had a little trouble at the start with the Fast Clocks not working. About 15 minutes into the session, **Dave Clinton** asked to cycle the layout power and they magically started working. *Huzzah!* We then had a smooth night, the complete opposite of Monday.

It was fun time with good power. *All hail steam!*

**Paul Cutler III** 

## “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...”

I set out to begin my column with the familiar Dickens quote “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” because those two lines seem so perfectly suited for the current state of Amtrak. However, my eyes were drawn to the rest of the quote—“it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

Though written in the 1800's, what a perfect description of our current status. Thinking of vintage parlor cars being removed from Amtrak's Coastal Starlight—as well as Amtrak's Great Dome Car from our Downeaster that we were hoping would become an annual amenity on our Downeaster after it was refurbished. We were also hoping that the long distance trains would remain in service way into the future—and that congressional funding would be adequate to maintain the existing services longer than just another year. (According to the Wyandotte

Daily, serving Kansas City, Amtrak's CEO responded to the recent letter written by a large number of US Senators inquiring about the status of all long distance routes by saying that “... Amtrak will not alter or truncate any long-distance routes before the end of the 2019 fiscal year.”)

Continuing, we were hoping for summer weekend service between Brunswick and Rockland which we felt could lead ultimately to daily service during the summer months as was done a hundred years ago for thousands of visitors from Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) and TrainRiders attended public events in coastal communities for the past two years, where everyone was very excited and welcoming about having

Amtrak summer service. It now appears that disappointment is our prize and once again the stakeholders have been ignored by top management.

We also know that there are folks in Washington that hope that we activists will be so dazzled by all the hype about new equipment, replacing not only single level cars but the aging Superliner 1 cars, and new locomotives, etc., that we won't focus on such things as elimination of traditional dining cars and hot meals vs cold sandwiches and “contemporary cuisine” and elimination of Checked Baggage service, among other things.

Meanwhile, we soldier on and on, representing our members and the general public as we seek to preserve, expand and improve not just our existing regional service, but what remains of America's National Rail System.

—Wayne Davis

### **It's not the tunnel for our Downeaster we'd hoped for, but we'll take it.**



It's no longer necessary to walk outdoors (think wind, rain, snow and angry traffic) to get to the Orange/Green Lines from Boston's North Station. A new underground connecting tunnel has been opened. This means there's no need to fight foul weather while continuing your trip to South Station or local 'T' stops in Beantown. Progress takes time, but when it arrives, it's a miracle! Well done, Boston!

—Written by Bill Lord, TRN Webmaster. See more about this miracle in Boston on our website. Story courtesy The Boston Globe.

From “TrainRider” newsletter of “TrainRiders Northeast”. Wayne Davis, Chairman.