

The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr.
“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Boston <u>Herald Reporter</u>	Jim South
Boston <u>Globe & Wall Street Journal</u> Reporters	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Western Massachusetts.....	Ron Clough
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
“The Chief’s Corner”.....	Fred Lockhart
Mid-Atlantic News.....	Doug Buchanan

PRODUCTION STAFF

Publication.....	Al Taylor Al Munn Jim Ferris Bryan Miller
Web Page	Savery Moore
Club Photographer.....	Joe Dumas
Guest Contributors.....	Sister Mary David

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
E-mail: daveclinton@verizon.net Club phone: 781-740-2000. Web page: www.ssmrc.org

VOLUME 39 ■■■■■ NUMBER 11 ■■■■■ NOVEMBER 2019

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('20)
.....	Bryan Miller ('20)
.....	Roger St. Peter ('21)
.....	Gary Mangelinkx ('21)

BILL OF LADING

By-Law Amendment.....	6
Chief’s Corner	4
Contests	4
Clinic.....	5
Editor’s Notes.	12
Form 19 Calendar.....	4
Members.....	12
Memories.....	5
In Memoriam.....	3
The Operator	17
Potpourri.....	7
Running Extra.....	13
Sister Mary David.....	6

ON THE COVER: Operations on the ECL this month. Joe Dumas photos.



In Memoriam
Gordon “Skip” Burton
 April 13, 1938 – November 12, 2019



On Tuesday, the 12th, we lost a great friend and the World lost a real gentleman in Skip Burton.

Skip was born in Boston, graduated from Northeastern University, School of Engineering and was married to Marilyn (Bulloch) for 59 years. They lived in Braintree, Holbrook, Buzzards Bay and were in the process of moving to Plymouth, when Skip passed away. Skip served in the Navy and the Naval Reserves for 30 years, retiring as a Senior Chief Petty Officer. He was co-owner of Burton Forrester Associates until retiring in early 2003. At age 68, he went to work for the Cape Cod Central RR and worked hard to qualify as a locomotive engineer. He later worked for the Mass Coastal RR, the freight arm of CCCRR, retiring two years ago. Skip was proud of his son and daughter and frequently spoke about his two grandsons.

Skip became a member of the SSMRC in September 1991...just in time to become very involved in the transformation of one of the Navy ammunition depot buildings, called “Building 51” into the present World Headquarters of the South Shore Model Railway Club. He was a very active member, involved in all the construction projects, as well as the “extra-curricular” activities of the Club, like our annual pool party and “Junk Food Jollies”.



was a member of the Board of Directors for several years, and since acquiring Building 51 there were many important decisions to make; his steady and firm advice guided us through some tenuous times.

Besides being a talented modeler of the Boston & Maine and Conrail, he was a very generous person. He and Marilyn loved North Conway and had a condo there, later moving to a second home on Conway Lake, where he graciously invited a group of us to visit for several years. He had made friends with Dwight Smith, founder and owner of the Conway Scenic RR and also joined the North Conway Model RR Club. On one of our visits, he arranged for the “ride of a lifetime” for several members--in the caboose on a train through Crawford Notch—in the days before the CSRR ran regular trains through the Notch.



old



Skip loved the Club, was friends with all...and we all loved Skip. Like many of us, he would spend the whole day standing and running trains during our Shows and Open Houses. Promoting the hobby was one of his purposes in life. Promoting and supporting the Club was high on his list, too. Everyone looked forward to our Annual Auction, when Skip would show up with ten 1-lb boxes of home-made Fudge from his lovely wife. Year, after year, she would prepare these boxed, yummy delights, with all proceeds going to the Club layout fund.

Thanks, Skip, for your friendship, kindness and love of mankind. I don't wonder that the Lord wanted you to be with him! We shall miss you, and may you rest in peace...until we meet again, my friend.

David N. Clinton

FORM 19 ORDERS

NOVEMBER B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, November 25th 8 p.m.

TRAINS ‘N TURKEY

Wednesday, November 27th 10 a.m.-

DECEMBER BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, December 2nd 8 p.m.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY AUCTION

Monday, December 2nd after Business Meeting

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, December 21st

DECEMBER B.O.D.

Monday, December 30th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to Doug Buchanan on winning this month's 50/50 raffle!



As usual, Al Taylor's "Word Find" puzzle was very popular, with 15 members finding the words and entering the contest:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Bob Farrenkropf | Savery Moore |
| Will Baker | "Gunny" |
| Roger St. Peter | Bryan Miller |
| Jim South | Dan Peterson |
| Doug Buchanan | Don Pierce |
| Bill Garvey | Fred Lockhart |
| Jim Ferris | Al Munn |
| Ron Clough | |

Congratulations to **Dan Peterson** on winning the drawing for the new Bowser Covered Hopper, decorated for the Delaware & Hudson!

For the January contest, by tradition, prizes will be 2020 Railroad Calendars supplied by those who enter the contest—kind of a "swap". So, when you're ordering your RR calendar, why not add an extra for donating to the contest? Here's the Contest question:

Name the famous Viaduct: a blind arcade cavity wall railroad viaduct built in 1834-35, that is still in daily use by a railroad. When completed, it was the longest and tallest railroad viaduct in the World and, today, is the last surviving viaduct of its kind. Answer sheets in train room or any paper with correct answer will work. Don't forget your name and good luck!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Here we go again! If you were at the show and open house on Sunday you already know what



happened to the DCC system in the afternoon: the "electronic gremlins" showed up and took our system down. It started slowly after lunch and just got worse to the point where no one could acquire their trains or control them. Basically, the LocoNet was corrupted. We did recover, but it was about a half hour

without trains running--NOT GOOD! Afterwards, in talking it over, the discussion centered around the throttles because it has become known in other groups that the older DT400 throttles, which cannot have their firmware upgraded to the latest versions may corrupt the system. Especially when a lot of throttles are being used at the same time; we did find that there were two or three DT400s being used Sunday. So, what are we going to do? First, any DT400 will have to be sent to Digitrax to have a new board installed; the cost is very reasonable. We have sent the club 400s, so they will be upgraded and available for a member to use if their throttle can't be used. Second, upgrading to the latest version of firmware will continue on a more organized basis. We can do that in house, so you don't give up your throttle for a long time. Bob England is handling that and he is being assisted by Paul III. Third, all throttle IDs will be checked to make sure no one has a duplicate ID. After that, your throttle will be logged into a data base in our computers--much like locomotive registration, so we can keep track of the status of the throttles. If someone arrives for any operations, casual or organized, with a DT400 they will be given a club throttle to use, because as now DT400s are embargoed. There are a couple more suggestions to try, that may improve our LocoNet system. One involves the UR92 receivers and the other involves the UP5 devices. If you have any questions on the throttles, I will be glad to address them.

Progress on the railroad is starting again; the most noticeable would be the new bench work. Roger and his crew have two sections, sixteen feet, up on legs; the next two sections will be up shortly. Electrical work continues in Middleton. Stan has installed the West Middleton model board in the pit and is trouble-shooting a couple of issues. Bob has set up a separate power supply and circuit breakers for the Larson branch, including the narrow gauge

railroad and the trolley area. The Larson branch had been “temporarily” hooked into the Mountain Div. for years and it has been something we wanted to separate for quite a while. Scenery work continues in several areas.

That is it for this month. Your questions and comments are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

One member, one applicant and one guest made appearances tonight.

New applicant **Eric Mercer** brought an original Athearn F7, which he hardwired with the DH123D. This is an all-evening project, due to having to isolate the motor from the chassis. The loco worked fine, but the light didn't, so we decided to call it a night and start fresh at the next clinic. It's possible that the decoder is bad, though that has not happened in a long time. We will check it with another next time.

Will Baker brought the ConCor B&M passenger cars, which he had purchased off the WET. All needed coupler height adjustments and decent couplers. One car, in particular, was a “problem child”, where the previous owner seemed to have removed some support work for the underbody, which was just “floating” in mid-air. A new coupler pocket and 5-minute Epoxy fixed it up just fine, so his new B&M train is ready to roll!

Former member **Ross Hall** brought an “antique” ATSF 4-4-2, imported by Balboa; the company has been gone for 40+ years. Upon seeing the Pittman DC70X motor, ye Ed determined this could not be isolated from the chassis, so Ross could purchase a new “can” motor instead. Better modeler **Paul Cutler III** felt differently, so they will be working on that problem area at the next clinic.

Because of declining interest, due to most new equipment coming with decoders, **our next Clinic** will be **Thursday, January 2nd** and we will be following an “every second month” schedule from now on. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

NOVEMBER 2014 (5 years ago)

✱Soldering iron mishap caused huge problems on RR.

✱New logo unveiled for regional rail service on the “Hartford Line” between Springfield & New Haven, paid for by the State of CT.

✱New \$44-million MBTA intermodal station opens in Salem, MA.

✱White River Productions acquires Railfan & Railroad Magazine from Carstens.

✱MBTA plans on establishing a Commuter Rail station at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough and purchasing the Framingham Secondary line to expedite the new service.

✱NJ Transit's last GE U34CH donated to United Railroad Historical Society in New Jersey.

✱MBTA chooses Chinese company to build new Red and Orange Line subway cars in Springfield, MA.

✱South Station rededicated as “Governor Michael S. Dukakis South Station Transportation Center”.

✱Former Amtrak president David L. Gunn recognized for his service to the RR with the naming of the first ACS-64 electric #600 for him.

✱Boston Surface RR announces plans to start passenger service between Providence and Worcester.

✱Central Maine & Quebec Rwy meets with business leaders to bring back services lost by the predecessor line, the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic.

✱MBTA invests \$6 million to up-grade operations center at 99 High Street.

NOVEMBER 2009 (10 years ago)

✱An ex-Santa Fe F45, painted into GN's “Big Sky Blue”, is gutted and become part of the lodging at Isaac Walton Inn at Essex, Montana, on the BNSF mainline.

✱CPR sells historic Windsor Station in Montreal.

✱Amtrak equips all *Acelas* with Wi-Fi service.

✱Plaistow, NH officials discuss possibility of extending MBTA Commuter Rail to their town.

✱BNSF owner Berkshire Hathaway will purchase 78% of remaining BNSF stock it does not own.

✱Vandals cause \$100,000 damage to Connecticut Eastern RR Museum in Willimantic, CT.

✱GE Transportation sells 300 locomotive assemblies to CSR Qishuyan Locomotive Co. in China, forming a “joint venture” with that company.

✱MBTA completes \$172 million in upgrades of Blue Line, with 6-car trains running at all times.

✱Minnesota starts service on “Northstar” commuter rail.

NOVEMBER 2004 (15 years ago)

✱Lionel files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

✱Bowser acquires Stewart.

✱UP begins installation of cameras on locos.

✱Lake Shore Limited becomes “shuttle” train between Boston and Albany, with no through cars to Chicago.

✱Florida high-speed “Bullet” train plans killed in election.

✱MBTA unveils “Charlie Card”.

✱First load of concrete ties for Greenbush Line arrives in Quincy Shipyard.

✱B&O Museum opens after roof collapse in 2003.

✱WW&F finishes “run-around” track at Alna station.

✱New York City subways celebrate 100 years.

NOVEMBER 1999 (20 Years Ago)

- "Flyover" track at W. Middleton begun.
- MBTA begins taking delivery of low-floor trolley cars from Breda.
- MBTA sells last ten of its F10 locomotives.
- BNSF stops repainting units in "Warbonnet" scheme.
- Work progresses on new Portland, ME, station in anticipation of new Amtrak service.
- P2K produces its first steamer, a 2-8-8-2.
- Amtrak signs 25-year agreement to add up to 350 refrigerated rail cars to passenger trains.
- Old turntable/roundhouse artifacts unearthed in Whitman, next to Old Colony RR station under constr.
- Canton Viaduct made a national historic civil engineering landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers.
- Edaville turns on 200,000+ Christmas lights for the first time since 1991.

NOVEMBER 1994 (25 Years Ago)

- *Pioneer Zephyr* of Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry begins 2-year rehab in Wisconsin.
- St. Lawrence & Atlantic opens new intermodal terminal in Auburn, ME.
- Amtrak receives environmental green light for New Haven-Boston electrification.
- The *Eurostar* makes inaugural run through "Chunnel" between Brussels, Paris and London.
- Amtrak runs *New England Express* between Boston and New York, as precursor to high-speed service now called *Acela Express*.

NOVEMBER 1989 (30 Years Ago)

- Two new Club Cars: Athearn ("Bluebox") boxcars in new and old ECL schemes.
- South Station rededication, after 5-year rehab.
- P2K introduces its first HO loco, the EMD BL2.
- CT D.O.T. purchases equipment from Pittsburgh for "Shore Line East" service.
- Amtrak tests two EMD F69PH units. (never ordered)
- Canadian Pacific successful bidder to run ex-D&H trackage for the State of New York.
- "Train Riders Northeast" group formed to put referendum on Maine ballot for return of Amtrak service to Portland.
- Edaville's steam loco #7 celebrates its 75th birthday. Build by Baldwin, now at Maine Narrow Gauge Museum.

NOVEMBER 1984 (35 Years Ago)

- Five SSMRC members ride Rep. Ned Kirby's "Campaign Train" from Braintree to Plymouth.
- SSMRC youth group chooses name "Highballers".
- Steamtown's "Big Boy" leaves Bellows Falls, VT, pulled by two Geeps separated by several boxcars, for new Steamtown location in Scranton, PA.
- Original "Springfield Terminal Rwy" abandoned between Springfield, VT and Charlestown, NH.
- Mew Red Line extension stations open in Porter Square, Cambridge and Davis Square in Somerville.

- B&M bridge over Danvers River between Beverly and Salem burns to the waterline, cutting rail service north of Salem.
- C&NW takes over Milwaukee Road operations.
- Cape Cod & Hyannis reports 20,000+ riders on its trains from Braintree to Hyannis during past summer.
- Last two public rail-highway crossings between Washington and New Haven closed; 17 remain between New Haven and Boston
- Amtrak's daily *Bay State* train on the "Inland Route" from Boston to Washington reinstated, after discontinuance in 1975,

BY-LAWS AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

This proposed amendment to our By-Laws was posted last month, read at the November Business Meeting and will be voted on at the December Business meeting.

Amendment Proposal

Article II: Membership and Dues

Section 1

C: Life Membership

Eligibility:

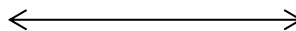
Add: "4. Or, a Regular Member, who has been a member continuously for 50 years, shall become eligible to be voted as a Life Member."

Proposed by the following Regular Members:

Dan Peterson, Paul Cutler III, Bryan Miller, Dave Clinton

Doug Buchanan, Bylaw Committee Chairman

14 October, 2019



SISTER MARY DAVID LETTER

Hi Boys,

In case you haven't been to the Club lately, I wanted to tell you about the beautiful job that was done to our tile floors earlier this month. Two young men from Tri-M Cleaning spent two mornings stripping the floors and applying three coats of wax, to make them look "brand-new". It has been over four years, since this was previously done, so they looked tired and dirty (and so did the workers).

It would be nice if you fellows could keep them looking this way for as long as possible and you can! It was very disconcerting to find the stuff on the floor that I did, after the furniture had been removed--even a plastic knife with butter on it. Really? If you drop something on the floor, please pick it up. I can't believe that you would not pick up dropped items, if you were home, so why do it at your beautiful Club?



I know that many of you fellows take the facilities for granted but you shouldn't! They are fantastic and the envy of most other modelers and clubs. You are so fortunate to have "fallen" into the opportunity of Building 51 back in 1992 and to have had the money to do what you did with the building. You should respect and be proud of what you have and pick up after yourselves. Crumbs and spills on the floor can easily be picked up with the cloth at the sink or the paper towels and water. Also, please don't drag furniture across any of the floors!

More floor mats have been added to wipe your shoes on, instead of on the tile floors. With everyone's help, the facility will stay sparkling for a long time!

God bless you all,

Sister Mary David

POTPOURRI

IF AMTRAK EXPECTS to reach its goal of breaking even by 2021, it must improve its on-time performance significantly. According to a report in Business Insider, the rail passenger carrier's on-time performance is so poor that it could be costing the railroad \$42 million per year. This amount is based on the Amtrak inspector general's report of its study of Amtrak routes, which found that 31 of 43 routes failed to meet Amtrak's own on-time performance standards. These standards call for 70% of long-distance trains to be on time, and 80% of state-supported trains to operate according to the schedule. The inspector general pointed out that if on-time performance could be increased by only five percentage points, Amtrak could achieve \$8.2 million in lower costs and a revenue increase of nearly \$4 million. The report added "We identified a range of other financial benefits that could accrue if the company was able to improve OTP [on-time performance] to a minimum level of 75 percent on long distance trains and sustain those improvements for at least a year." While some of Amtrak's schedule delays are likely due to Amtrak's processes and procedures, the inspector general said that most of the delays are caused by the host railroads – most of Amtrak's mileage is owned by freight railroads over which Amtrak operates. And while, according to federal law, Amtrak trains must be given priority over freight trains, "company executives have stated publicly that host railroads routinely disregard these laws, resulting in delays," the inspector general said. (RA)

●●●●●

AN ADVISORY GROUP studying six different plans for the future of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has thrown its support behind the most elaborate, and most expensive, plan. Members of the 25-person panel held an hour-long meeting with the MBTA's governing Fiscal and Management Control Board recently, saying their preference was for a fully electrified commuter rail system which would offer trains on 15-minute headways system-wide. The estimated cost for that plan: \$28.9 billion in 2020 dollars. Other aspects of the "Full Transformation" plan, as outlined in an MBTA presentation, include high-level platforms at all stations, 59 miles of new or additional track, and new electric multiple-unit equipment for the currently diesel-only MBTA. The agency estimates this could lead to 225,900 additional boardings per day, an increase of 150%. The other five alternatives provide increases estimated at 13% to 54%. The advisory group's recommendation does not address how to pay for the project. (TN) "Pie-in-the-sky"!-Ed.

●●●●●

FEDERAL REGULATORS, who in July had hit the pause button on the proposed acquisition of Genesee & Wyoming, today allowed the deal to proceed. Brookfield Asset Management and its Singapore-based investment partner expect the \$8.4-billion acquisition of G&W to close later this year or early next year. (TN)

●●●●●

IN EDWARD NORTON'S new movie, "Motherless Brooklyn" (released Nov. 1), the year is 1957. Evocatively filmed, with an incredible jazz score, it captures the gritty New York City of that time: devoid of chain drug stores and Starbucks; with classic automobiles, buses, and trucks; period signage; and two scenes on a vintage subway train. And a then-47-year-old Pennsylvania Station--today long gone. The production stayed very close to turning back the clock 62 years. It's in the fashion, the hair styles, and the Hollywood magic recreating Penn Station, the Beaux Arts structure by architects McKim, Mead & White Beaux Arts that opened in 1910 and was torn down in 1966. Built of imported travertine marble, with 150-foot vaulted ceilings, 60-foot Corinthian columns, wide staircases, and glass floor tiles that streamed light onto the train platforms below, it was a challenging item to replicate. Visual effects supervisor Mark Russell worked with Norton to achieve the proper feel and look. The station exists in the movie for one of its most crucial scenes, to remind everyone

of the need for historic preservation — an effort which began as the last pieces of the original Penn



Station were carted away to the nearby Meadowlands in New Jersey. “The loss of Penn Station is an emotional scar that still haunts New York,” Russell said, “and an emblem of what we shouldn’t let happen again.” In a striking juxtaposition of eras, the Penn Station scenes were filmed at the former Grumman Aerospace Apollo Lunar Module assembly plant in Bethpage, Long Island. Production Designer Beth Mickle built a shoeshine stand, benches, and lockers, while Lighting Director Dick Pope designed lighting to replicate the station’s high windows. The actors performed against a giant green screen, with special effects subsequently filling in the true replication of the station. While few color photos of the vanished landmark exist, Russell used as his base scenes from the 1955 movie “The Seven-Year Itch,” which included color scenes in the station. The 1957 version portrayed in the movie is somewhat shabby, reflecting the Pennsylvania Railroad’s need at the time to reduce spending on passengers. Norton, Pope, and Russell utilized an NCam system, which allowed them to simultaneously use digital backgrounds and live action in real-time. This allowed the cast and crew to see a pre-visualization of the original Penn Station as they worked. Having viewed the movie, this *Trains News Wire* reviewer suggests paying to see Penn Station in its original state, even if it isn’t as pristine as it was in 1910. The rest of the movie will keep you enthralled. (TN)

●●●●●

JUST IN TIME for Halloween, the B&O Railroad Museum has received its own sweet treat in the form of a Domino Sugar Co. Plymouth diesel locomotive. The 1950 Plymouth, a 35-ton model MDT, was known as "Sweet Toot." Since 1992, it switched the Domino Sugar refinery near the Inner Harbor almost daily. A newer locomotive with more

power, better fuel economy and lower emissions has replaced it, according to American Sugar Refining, Domino’s owner. The Domino refinery produces both granulated and liquid sugar, loading about 1,100 cars annually, according to a news report. Larger and heavier railcars required a more robust unit than "Sweet Toot." CSX moved the little Plymouth, which is operational, to the museum last week. It will be used as the switcher for the museum’s restoration shop. Museum executive director Kris Hoellen tells reporters the engine is “an authentic piece of Baltimore railroad history” that the museum also can put to use. (TN)

●●●●●

THE RESTORATION of Boston & Maine 4-6-2 No. 3713 took a major leap forward this month with the arrival of a brand new firebox. On Oct. 17, Steamtown National Historic Site took delivery of a new inside firebox built by the Strasburg Rail Road that will be installed in the Lima-built Pacific. The firebox cost about \$148,600 and a year to build. National Park Service officials say the locomotive needs about \$1.5 million to run; half of that money will come from the federal government and the other half will be raised by Project 3713, a nonprofit support group. Officials say when the locomotive runs again depends entirely on funding and manpower. No. 3713 was one of five Pacific-type locomotives delivered to the B&M in 1934 for passenger service. In 1937, the B&M held a contest for school children to name 20 passenger locomotives, including No. 3713. The railroad received more than 10,000 suggestions. J. Schumann Moore of Eastern High School in Lynn, Mass., suggested “The Constitution” and the name was applied to No. 3713 at a ceremony at Boston’s North Station on Dec. 11, 1937. The locomotive was retired in 1956 and purchased by F. Nelson Blount, a millionaire businessman who collected the steam locomotives that form the core of the Steamtown collection. In the mid-1990s, the locomotive was selected from the park’s collection for restoration. (TN)

●●●●●

THE FIRST OPERATIONAL locomotive restored to its Conrail appearance made its public debut this weekend at the B&O Railroad Museum. SW7 No. 8905 was



restored to Conrail blue thanks to a partnership between the B&O Railroad Museum and the Conrail Historical Society. The end-cab switcher was built in 1950 for New York Central subsidiary Peoria & Eastern Railway. The locomotive eventually ended up on Penn Central and later Conrail. In 1989, Conrail sold the switcher to the Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad, where it remained until 2004, when it was purchased by the B&O Railroad Museum. The locomotive was painted into a unique red paint scheme and used as the museum's primary motive power for short excursions on the oldest rail line in America. In 2017, the locomotive was due for a new coat of paint and so the museum approached the CRHS about getting proper paint diagrams to restore the locomotive to its Conrail appearance. What started out as a request for help turned into a partnership to jointly raise the \$6,000 needed to repaint the locomotive. According to CRHS President Rudy Garbely, Conrail Shared Assets also made a significant contribution to the restoration. The restoration was completed in October 2019. (TN)

●●●●●

PLANS TO BUILD a new waterfront passenger depot and storage facility are underway for the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad. A site plan for the two buildings is under review by Portland's Department of Planning and Urban Development. The nonprofit passenger railroad and museum hopes to break ground next month and have a new ticket building ready next spring. "We are definitely trying to



move in as soon as we possibly can, right now the onus is to get this permit done," Executive Director Wesley Heinz said. The organization wants to build a small ticketing building and waiting platform, styled on classic train stations, at the intersection of Hancock and Thames streets. About a mile away, at the terminus of its 2-foot wide rail line at the base of Munjoy Hill, the group plans to build a storage building. (PP)

●●●●●

AMTRAK ANNOUNCED another ridership record in Fiscal Year 2019, providing 32.5 million customer trips, a year-over-year increase of 800,000 passengers. "We are growing and modernizing Amtrak. We have an industry-leading safety program and have invested billions in improving the customer experience, resulting in more people

choosing Amtrak as their preferred mode of transportation," says Amtrak Board Chair Tony Coscia. "These changes have put us on track to breakeven in 2020, which would be a first in Amtrak's history." Amtrak recorded an operating loss of \$29.8 million, an improvement of \$140.9 million or 82.6% compared with the previous year. However, it does not break out revenue by route as it has does in the past. "I would characterize 2019 as a solid year for Amtrak, marked by steady improvement, steady and consistent improvement on all measures and activities across the railroad," says President and CEO Richard Anderson. (TN) Unfortunately, some of the improvement has been done on the back of reduced dining services and **no** orders for replacement of the 40-year-old Superliner fleet for long-distance service. Also, Amtrak doesn't comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) –Ed.

●●●●●

MOMENTS AFTER UNION PACIFIC Big Boy No. 4014 with the George H.W. Bush Presidential



Library diesel No. 4141 in the consist of its passenger train arrived in College Station, at the home of Texas A&M University, railroad officials announced the

donation of the SD70ACe to the Bush library. In a scene reminiscent of the Bush funeral train that operated with No. 4141 leading from Houston to College station about 11 months ago, No. 4014 and train pulled into this college town for the ceremony that included Neil Bush, son of the late President; Scott Moore, UP vice president; and former UP Chairman Dick Davidson. No. 4141 was built as UP No. 8423 in 2005 and repainted in a scheme replicating Air Force One later in the year. It operated a short time in the special scheme and was placed in storage during the recession of 2007-2010. It operated briefly before its Dec. 6, 2018 use on the presidential funeral train. (TN)

●●●●●

AMTRAK RECENTLY ANNOUNCED the progress on its new high-speed Acela trainsets that it says "will redefine the customer experience on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor when they enter service in 2021." We've seen the insides and how the new

trainsets are made, but the passenger rail company now has released a photo of the first prototype (still under construction) being assembled at Alstom's Hornell, N.Y., facility. Amtrak's Acela Express, which replaced the iconic Metroliner service that helped define the Northeast Corridor for the better part of 30 years, is now approaching age 20 (kind of old for a train). The equipment, popular with customers but sort-of affectionately called "The Fast Pig" in railroading circles, will soon be replaced with new, lighter, sleeker and faster trainsets scheduled to enter service sometime in 2021 between Washington, D.C. and Boston. (RA)



●●●●●
PALMER, MA, once known as "The town of seven railroads", used to have 16 passenger trains stopping at the famous station, now the "Steaming Tender Restaurant". Today there are no passenger trains stopping and the one passenger train traveling the line, the *Lake Shore Limited*, does not stop between Worcester and Springfield on it's daily east and west runs. In MassDOT's latest review of passenger rail between Boston and Springfield, one of the six options include a stop in Palmer; local and state officials are working hard to make that happen. (J-R)

●●●●●
BOSTON-AREA GOVERNMENT leaders are calling for a 15-cent increase in Massachusetts' gas tax to help fund transit and roadway projects. Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, along with members of the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, the North Shore Coalition, and the Commuter Rail Communities Coalition, have called on Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker and the state legislature to approve "significant new revenue" for transportation funding. The proposed 15-cent addition to the gas tax, currently 24 cents per gallon, would bring in an estimated \$450 million per year. "We need to take the essential next steps to improve mobility in our city and our state," Walsh said in a statement, "and increasing revenue for critical infrastructure is needed to ensure our current and future residents

are able to move around the region in an equitable, affordable and reliable manner." The groups also called for additional highway tolls and higher fees on ride-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft, among other concepts. (TN)

●●●●●
AMTRAK HAS DEBUTED a new look for Siemens ACS-64 No. 606: the colors of Coca-Cola. The locomotive marks a new partnership with Coca-Cola, signaling the end of a long-running agreement for Pepsi to supply Amtrak's trains.



●●●●●
NORFOLK SOUTHERN has put its A-B-B-A set of executive F unit locomotives up for auction. Regularly assigned to NS's office car train, the quartet was acquired in 2006 and rebuilt to GP38-2 standards by the railroad's Juniata Locomotive Shop in Altoona, Pa. Since then, they have been based in Altoona, along with the company's 20-plus office cars. The locomotives wear a version of the former Southern Railway black-and-gray F unit



paint scheme, with an image of the railroad's thoroughbred horse on the nose of each A unit. The cars wear the Norfolk &

Western's classic Tuscan red paint with gold lettering. Southern, which merged with N&W in 1982 to create NS, was an early convert to diesel power, acquiring the demonstrator set of FT units that ran an 8,700-mile tour around the United States in 1939-1940. That performance widely proved the practicality of diesel-electric power in heavy freight service. Up to that time, it had been confined to lighter-duty passenger and switching

service. Built by the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors Corp. in 1952, the two A units, Nos. 270 and 271, began life as Baltimore & Ohio F7 locomotives. Rated at 1,800 HP, the A units were previously used by MARC, the Maryland Area Rail Commuter service. The B units, numbered 275 and 276 and rated at 2,000 HP, were built by EMD in 1950 for the Chicago Great Western.

In late news: Two of Norfolk Southern's "Fab Four" Electro-Motive F units — F9A No. 270 and F7B No. 275 — have been purchased by Pennsylvania regional Reading & Northern. "We're going to fix them up for our passenger train," R&N owner and chairman Andrew M. Muller Jr. said. The railroad operates special trains over much of its 350-mile system throughout the year, using freight locomotives and its large collection of passenger cars. R&N already owns two former Bessemer & Lake Erie F7s that are being restored for service. Muller says the newly acquired A-B set will be teamed up with one of the ex-B&LE units to form a matched A-B-A lashup. Tentative plans are to replace the NS light gray paint with R&N Tuscan red on the streamlined units. They will retain their NS numbers. Interestingly, the Reading Company rostered a freight F7 carrying No 270 through the 1950s and '60s. The new No. 270 will operate on some of that same trackage. (TN)

●●●●●

THE BOARD OVERSEEING the MBTA has approved work on the next phases of a project to double-track its Franklin Line commuter-rail route. At a recent meeting, the Fiscal and Management Control Board approved a \$30 million contract for second-phase work and third-phase preliminary design work. The contract went to commuter rail operator Keolis Commuter Services. The first phase of the project, adding 4 miles of double track between Walpole and Norfolk, is expected to be complete in spring 2020, the MBTA says. The second phase will add 3½ miles of double track from Norfolk to Frank Street, east of Franklin, and is projected for completion in December 2020. The final phase will add 4 miles from Walpole to Norwood Central. That will complete double-tracking of the 27-mile, 16-station route from South Station to Franklin, Mass. (TN)

●●●●●

AS EXPECTED, New York State has restarted its plan to remove 34 miles of tracks between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid, to create a rail trail and other recreational facilities. Existing tracks south of Tupper Lake would be rehabilitated to support

continuing rail operations, according to the plan. The Adirondack Scenic RR's Board of Director's letter from Nov. 22 says the railroad supports the rehabilitation of the line from Big Moose to Tupper Lake, N.Y., which is included in the New York State plan. The railroad has not changed



its opposition to removing the tracks to Lake Placid for a rail-trail, and says the state's announcement "continues the misguided effort that seeks to deprive the communities of Saranac Lake and Lake Placid of a direct connection to the national rail network." (TN)

●●●●●

CANADIAN PACIFIC (CP) has reached an agreement with Fortress Transportation and Infrastructure Investors LLC to acquire the Central Maine & Quebec Railway (CMQ), which owns 481 miles of rail lines, primarily in Quebec and Maine. The end-to-end transaction will provide CP customers with access to ports at Searsport, Me., and to Saint John, New Brunswick, via Eastern Maine Railway Company (EMRY) and New Brunswick Southern Railway (NBSR). "This strategic acquisition gives CP a true coast-to-coast network across Canada and an increased presence in the eastern U.S.," said CP President and CEO Keith Creel. "With additional port access, more dots on the map and our proven Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model, we are confident this transaction will bring benefits to all stakeholders moving forward." CMQ, Railway Age's 2016 Regional Railroad of the Year, was created from the bankrupt assets of the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic, the railroad involved in the infamous Lac-Mégantic crude oil train disaster, a wreck that claimed 47 lives and decimated a small, bucolic Canadian village. "If history is to be accurately served, the history books will also recount how a new railroad came in, and did its best to set things right, restoring service, but more important, helping a community get back on its feet," *Railway Age* wrote in 2016. (RA)

●●●●●

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

TRAINS

Mission: Stop a Train
Linking a Nation

Canadian Pacific transcontinental

Trains 2019 Photo Contest Winners

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Modeling Riverbank Tree Roots

Easy, Removable Coal Loads
Makin' Waves
Look Both Ways
Magazine Mania
Editor's Notebook
The Hobby is Dying; and Other Myths

MODEL RAILROADER

A Place on the Pennsy, ca. 1955
Step by Step

Weathering Without an Airbrush

DCC Corner

How to Wire Reverse Loops with DCC

Trains of Thought

Rekindling the Passions of Youth (attached)

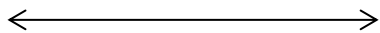
RAILPACE

Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railroad Museum

CLASSIC TRAINS (Fall 2019)

1944: Steam's Last Great Year

Archive Treasures



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](#), [Portland Press](#),
[Palmer Journal Register](#).

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. When **SETTING THE ALARM** before leaving, everyone must be out of the rooms and into the hallway and the **EXIT DOOR MUST BE CLOSED**. Please do this, as even if you put your code into the keypad, the alarm will not set, if these conditions are not met. Thanks!
2. **Bryan Miller** thanks everyone who donated Baked Goods to "**Jack's Red Tails Café**". He thanks **Gunny** and **Stan** for their assistance covering the table. Everyone's efforts helped make the Table a great success!
3. Hope to see you at our **Annual Holiday Auction**. Let's honor the fun times **Barry** gave us as Auctioneer for so many years and make this a successful occasion under new auctioneer **Paul Cutler III**.
4. And, for a relaxing and fun evening, don't forget "**Junk Food Jollies**" on Tuesday, December 10th.

5. **Happy Thanksgiving** to everyone and may you have safe journeys!

..... *David N. Clinton*

"The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Corinthians 9:6)



As has been a tradition for many years at the SSMRC, Bill Garvey, USMC, has set up a box in the meeting room to collect Toys for Tots. This is an extremely worthwhile cause, which was started many years ago by a Marine wanting to help make Christmas special for less fortunate children. The drive has blossomed into a huge, country-wide collection, which helps thousands of children experience the joys of Christmas. **Donated toys are to be new and unwrapped.** Please place in the box marked "Toys for Tots". The collection will continue until the weekend before Christmas. Thanks to Bill and all who participate in this great cause!

MEMBER NEWS

Our thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery to **Coley Walsh**, who is battling brain cancer. We're all rooting for you, Coley!

Our continued thoughts are with **Bill Garvey**, who continues to be in and out of the VA hospital. Come on, Bill, let's get it right this time! ☺

Welcome to two applicants, who have applied for membership because of their visit to the Fall Open House:

Richard Grimm from Hingham and **Eric Mercer** from Scituate. We look forward to getting to know you fellows, during your applicant period, and we hope your enthusiasm for the hobby shines through!

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:

Bill Garvey.....	December 2 nd
Jay Pease.....	December 2 nd
Nick Nickerson (H).....	December 3 rd
Stan Rydell.....	December 6 th
Chris Barlow.....	December 12 th
Paul Feeny.....	December 13 th
Will Baker.....	December 14 th
Ron Clough.....	December 15 th
Bill Sims.....	December 21 st



RUNNING EXTRA

CRRC’s “Chief Obligation is to the Chinese State”: Report

Written by William C. Vantuono, Editor-in-Chief, Railway Age Magazine.

“CRRC AND BEIJING’S DASH FOR GLOBAL ROLLING STOCK DOMINANCE,” a report prepared by Radarlock, which describes itself as “a research organization that uses data-driven analysis to understand techno-economic dynamics in world affairs,” says that China Railway Rolling Stock Corp. (CRRC) is an arm of the Chinese government with “indelible ties to the Chinese Communist Party” whose executives “wear dual hats as corporate and as Party leaders.”

“This report underscores the fact that CRRC is controlled by the Chinese government and has made crystal clear its desire to decimate the railcar manufacturing industry in the United States and the thousands of Americans it employs,” Rolling Stock Institute (RSI) President Mike O’Malley told *Railway Age*. Following is an excerpt of the report, prepared by Radarlock’s Emily de La Bruyère and Nathan Picarsic:

“In terms of direct financial support, CRRC is one of the most heavily subsidized companies in China. Since 2015, CRRC has reported a total of 5.4 billion RMB (almost \$800 million USD) in direct

subsidies, with 1.37 billion RMB (approximately \$ 191 million USD) in 2018. CRRC is expanding its global presence—is internationalizing, acquiring foreign technologies, and collecting global data—in concert with not just CCP (Chinese Communist Party), but also military actors. CRRC’s annual report explicitly declares its dedication to Beijing’s military-civil fusion (MCF) strategy: ‘We will implement the military-civil fusion development strategy and expand the application of technology and products,’ writes the company, alongside commitments to One Belt One Road (OBOR), Made in China 2025, Beijing’s ambitions to become a ‘Manufacturing Great Power,’ the Internet+ program that underlies the social credit system, and ‘Go Out.’ CRRC also works with other, less explicitly military players that the United States has already labeled as predatory actors or national security threats. For example, CRRC actively cooperates with Huawei, connecting the physical infrastructure of rail to Huawei’s information technology networks in pursuit of a government-linked ‘Internet of Things with Chinese characteristics.’ These connections are not accidental. CRRC is clear in its mandate that its chief obligation is to the Chinese State. The nature and status of company personnel reveal indelible ties to the CCP. Most of the managers are directly appointed for political purposes. Executives at CRRC wear dual hats as corporate and as Party leaders.”

RSI has circulated the Radarlock report to its member companies as well as on Capitol Hill. In [Should \[Washington\] Metro Worry About Chinese Railcars? Just Buy American](#), an opinion piece published by *The Hill*, O’Malley refers to the proposed federal funding ban on new procurements of mass transit railcars or buses from companies owned or subsidized by the government of the People’s Republic of China, if the procurement uses any Federal Transit Administration formula or bus funding. The ban is included in the [National Defense Authorization Act \(NDAA\)](#).

“Opponents of the measure have stepped up their defense with a consistent retort—that there is no American manufacturing of passenger railcars, suggesting that Chinese state-owned enterprises such as CRRC are somehow indistinguishable from the other private companies with which it competes in the United States. American jobs and businesses are not at stake, they argue, because the

companies CRRC competes with are similarly “foreign-owned” companies.

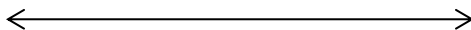
“That could not be further from the truth. Indeed, the companies CRRC competes with can all trace their roots back to countries outside the United States, companies that include well known multinational corporations such as Siemens, Alstom, Kawasaki, Hyundai Rotem, Stadler and Bombardier. But there are two key distinctions that make all of these companies entirely different from CRRC. Not only are they not state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that answer only to a sovereign government, but they also are very much American manufacturers. Much like their relatives in the automotive sector, companies such as Siemens, Alstom, Bombardier and Kawasaki have rich histories in the United States that stretch back decades or longer.”

Similarly, the [Alliance for American Manufacturing, commenting on the Radarlock report](#), said, “China’s SOEs like CRRC and [automobile manufacturer] BYD are part of China’s plan to dominate entire industries, and pose major economic and national security threats. U.S. taxpayer money shouldn’t be used to subsidize the ambitions of the Chinese State. Whether Congress passes a full NDAA or the slimmed-down version, it’s time for lawmakers to ban Chinese SOEs from building railcars and buses.”

CRRC has been aggressively pushing back against growing evidence that it is a Chinese SOE, releasing an infographic and establishing a website:

<https://www.railwayage.com/passenger/rapid-transit/crrc-ma-refuting-protectionist-rhetoric/?RChannel=home>

<https://www.railwayage.com/passenger/rapid-transit/crrc-pushes-back-on-line/?RChannel=home>



CRHA Railroad Museum now open in historic Canaan Union Station

Written by Dave Brown

The Connecticut Railroad Historical Association has announced the opening of their museum in the historic restored Union Station in Canaan, Connecticut. The museum is fairly small but the Association is adding to the collection as they go along.



As an added attraction, the group has rented the east-west wing of the station to the Great Falls Brewing Company, which has a tap room on the main floor and a function space on the second floor.

Once known as the oldest operating Union Station in the United States, the historic Victorian-era Union Depot of Canaan, CT survives as the heart of the town. The grand wooden structure was born in the heyday of the development of railroads in New England, and miraculously has survived, despite having been almost completely destroyed by fire on October 13, 2001.

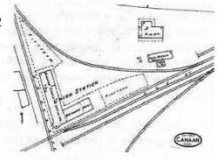
The Housatonic Railroad and Connecticut Western Railroad constructed the building in 1872 at the junction of the two lines in North Canaan.

The Housatonic ran generally north to south, following its namesake river through the hills and valleys of western Connecticut and Massachusetts. The “Western” later became the Central New England, and eventually, both railroads fell under the dominance of the New York, New Haven and Hartford. The “Western” ran from Hartford, west to Poughkeepsie, NY and the important high level bridge across the Hudson River, creating an all-rail route north of New York City, and connecting the coal fields of Pennsylvania to the factories of New England.

Passenger service was discontinued in 1971, and freight service lasted 1974, when the station was closed. It was saved from demolition and converted into a flourishing retail center, operation through Canaan in 1983, and there is still line service to customers on the short remaining segment of the old Western.

The CHRA purchased the station following the devastating fire and has worked diligently to reconstruct the station back to its original state at an estimated project cost of \$2.2 million.

The CRHA Railroad Museum will be celebrating its Grand Opening on Saturday, November 9, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM. There will be brewery tours throughout the day of family-friendly fun, with food trucks and a raffle (drawing at 4 PM). Great Falls Brewing Company will be featuring a special beer release: Hear My Train A Comin’ Brown Ale. There will be live music by Brother Other from 8 to 10 PM. [This article was compiled from material supplied by Richard V. Crump and from the web sites of the CRHA and the Great Falls Brewing Company.]



Connecticut Railroad Historical Association MUSEUM GRAND OPENING

November 9th at 10:00 am Railroad Museum, North Canaan

Raffle Prizes Include	Value
Grand Prize John Deere 5240 Mower	\$2,500
Stanton Equipment	\$2,500
Stanton - C&L Lumber	\$750
Painting - local artist Ken Musbach	\$275
2020 Season 7 Pass to Lanesville Town Grove	\$350
Brown-Johnson-Robb - 10 Barnington Airport	\$250
Golf - 18 Holes (In-season), cart included	\$100
Canaan Country Club	\$100
Certificates (2) for all change service, up to 1/2 mile	\$60
Bank's Time - each	\$60
Chase Board & Knife - local artisan Jesse Morry	\$75
Gift Certificate - Ed's Auto Parts	\$50
Gift Certificate - Stationery System	\$50
Gift Certificate - Canaan Auto	\$40
Gift Certificate - Sand Road Feed and Gift Shop	\$40

\$5.00 per ticket, available at C.A. Lindell and Curtis Insurance Agency

For Amtrak, speeding up the trains is a slow, frustrating process

By Luz Lazo THE WASHINGTON POST Ledger 11.4.19

Amtrak's new non-stop Acela service between Washington and New York was billed as the start of a new era of faster and more efficient passenger service in the Northeast.

The service, launched in September, connects the nation's two most powerful cities in 2 hours and 35 minutes, saving passengers about 15 minutes' travel time. In 2021, the railroad plans to debut more Acela train sets, and it is in the midst of other cosmetic changes and upgrades.

Amtrak appears to be on a roll, with record ridership, faster Acela service and improved amenities for its customers. But its ambitions for the busy Northeast Corridor, including higher speeds, fewer delays, more trains and an eventual 2-hour Washington-to-New York trip rest largely on its ability to raise billions needed for costly improvements to its aging and inadequate infrastructure.

“We aspire to hit higher top speeds, and ultimately the goal is to shrink the trip time,” said Caroline Decker, Amtrak's vice president for the Northeast Corridor line. “But we have to be very mindful of the infrastructure that we use that was really never designed for high-speed rail.”

Major choke points slow and disrupt train traffic along the corridor. Add to that work zones, aging track, bridges and tunnels, and long segments of curved terrain — all of which result in lower speeds.

Amtrak owns most of the track — 363 miles of the 457-mile corridor from Washington to Boston — and shares it with nine commuter and four freight rail systems. In all, more than 2,100 passenger trains and 60 freight trains use the Northeast Corridor daily.

The corridor, with 56.1 million people and \$2.6 trillion of economic activity, is a booming epicenter for the United States, making rail travel key to addressing traffic congestion

and facilitating growth in the region, experts and transportation leaders say.

The railroad estimates the corridor's 260 million passenger trips a year, including Amtrak and commuter trains, will reach over a half-billion by 2040.

“The demand is growing. The biggest challenge is, how do we meet that demand given the current constraints on our network,” Decker said.

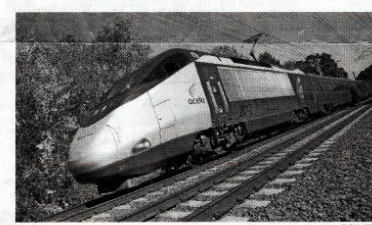
It's not just a concern for Amtrak. Though Amtrak owns most of the track in the corridor, of all the trips made in the corridor each year, only 17.1 million, or about 7 percent, are

“Trains will be able to go a little bit faster,” he said. “We can put more trains on the line.”

That's what Amtrak is betting on, to within the next decade beat the new Acela time record and push the trip from Washington to New York to just 2 hours.

“Should be an achievable goal,” Decker said.

The Acela runs at speeds up to 150 mph in a short stretch between Providence, Rhode Island, and Boston and reaches up to 135 mph in some stretches between New York and Washington. More than half of Amtrak trains operate at top speeds



■ An Amtrak Acela train travels through Old Lyme, Connecticut. REE PHOTO

on Amtrak. Any infrastructure improvements would benefit operations and growth of the commuter rail systems that ferry hundreds of thousands of workers daily, from those on Maryland MARC trains into the nation's capital to those on NJ Transit trains into Manhattan.

“We can talk about what the corridor ought to be and how we think it's going to go and what can happen if it grows, but until we tackle the core infrastructure issue, we are only going to tinker around the edges,” said Jim Mathews, president and chief executive of the nonprofit Rail Passengers Association.

Making the investments to eliminate those bottlenecks, however, would open up the way for more reliable service, Mathews said.

of 100 mph despite capability to travel much faster.

The railroad's trains could travel faster with track improvements, additional tracks and the elimination of critical choke points, officials say.

In recent years, Amtrak has been on a mission to improve service while reducing spending and to tackle some of its biggest infrastructure challenges. The nonstop Acela — District of Columbia bound in the morning and New York bound in the afternoon — is the latest initiative to attract more riders and remain relevant. Its speed is just one aspect.

The service that caters to the business traveler follows recent efforts to re-brand the railroad to make it more appealing to millennials and position itself as a more environ-

mentally friendly travel option. It also precedes other investments in the corridor, chiefly the delivery of new Acela train sets starting in 2021 and of a new station in New York, also that year.

Amtrak invested \$1.46 billion in capital projects in fiscal year 2018, the most in its recent history. The money was spent on projects aimed at increasing comfort on the corridor's Acela and Northeast Regiona services that carry nearly 40 percent of its 31.7 million passenger trips each year, including freshening up train interiors with new carpets, seat covers and cushions. The long-distance trains serving the Northeast are getting upgraded bedding, towel and linens.

The investment included an overhaul of WiFi systems aboard Northeast trains, modernized menus improved cleanliness of bathrooms, and new facilities — including lactation suites — at several major stations. The railroad also expanded its social media team to respond to passenger inquiries more quickly.

These customer service features, Decker said, had “been somewhat neglected over the years.”

Amtrak has also beefed up sale promotions, adding more buy-one-get-one ticket sales, even on its premium fares, to boost ridership. This past fiscal year, it was on track to beat 2018 ridership of 31.7 million: the highest in history. Ridership was 22.5 million when Amtrak introduced the Acela Express two decades ago.

The nonstop Acela, officials say, was a natural progression. So far, it's off to a good start, with a ridership of 8,000 in the first month, or about 320 passengers round trip daily, and has potential for growth.

The service and other recent improvements may just work, said Gabe Klein, a Washington-based transportation consultant and former head of the transportation departments in the District and Chicago.

“I will never take a plane to New York now,” said Klein, who travels frequently between Washington and New England. “Not only is it going to be that much easier to take Amtrak, it's much faster.”

Momentum builds for Boston-Springfield rail

JOHN CHESTO

CHESTO MEANS BUSINESS

Globe 11-9-19



Can a Springfield-Boston commuter train finally leave the station?

One of the most powerful members of the US House sure hopes so. Congressman Richie Neal of

Springfield trekked to Boston for a New England Council meeting on Thursday to make an important point: The next wave of spending on Big Rail needs to include his part of the state, not just the MBTA.

Then, on Friday, state Senator Eric Lesser showed off Union Station in Springfield to Congressman Joe Kennedy. Lesser made the case for his favorite project, east-west rail. (He also happened to endorse Kennedy for the US Senate.) The refurbished Springfield station, reopened in 2017 after decades of neglect, receives a regular parade of trains from Connecticut cit-

ies every day. But visits from Boston are few, courtesy of just one daily Amtrak train that takes well over two hours to get there.

It's not just Western Mass. politicians. A number of Boston executives see rail service beyond Worcester as one way to address their employees' frustrations with sky-high housing costs. This week, Boston business group A Better City estimated \$5 billion should be spent through 2040 on east-west "high-speed rail," as part of its ambitious call to invest \$50 billion in transportation over 20 years. That eye-popping number would be more than enough to make regular commuter service from Springfield a reality.

This quest might have seemed quixotic not so long ago. Governor Charlie Baker once threw on the brakes, vetoing legislation in 2016 to study the idea. But he reversed course two years later, and a state-funded review is chugging along. Six options surfaced in July, sans price tags. The simplest: six daily round trips along existing tracks between Springfield and Worcester, where riders could

transfer onto Boston-bound commuter trains. The most complex: up to 16 trains a day, racing down a less circuitous new rail corridor along the Mass. Pike. (An extension to Pittsfield is also in the mix.)

Which to choose? Not surprisingly, there's some disagreement.

Northampton economic development director Terry Masterson prefers starting with the low-budget approach first, and building up to regular commuter service. Even modest improvements could attract more riders, he argues, rather than waiting for new tracks to be put down.

Rick Sullivan, president of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, recognizes the logistical and financial hurdles. But he says it would be better to be bold from the start, to have a meaningful impact — such as with a plan that ensures a 90-minute, one-seat ride, to Boston.

No matter the final route, Neal wants Beacon Hill to show his part of the state some love. Like other Western Mass. politicians, Neal watched the Big Dig vacuum up transporta-

tion funds for a distinctly Boston project, for the better part of two decades. Now that transportation spending is the hot topic at the State House again, Neal says communities west of Westborough should benefit, too.

Neal points to the success of the Connecticut trains as evidence that his constituents will ride the rails, if given the option. The CT Rail Hartford line has been a resounding success so far, accelerating apartment construction in Wallingford, Windsor Locks, and other stops along the way.

Federal funds would be crucial to setting east-west trains in motion. Good thing Neal is now the House Ways and Means chairman, the person who holds the purse strings. The Springfield Democrat says he met with Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin two weeks ago. The focus: passing a new North American trade agreement. Neal says Mnuchin promised to serve up a viable infrastructure bill once that trade deal is done.

Even if he can secure piles of cash in Washington, Neal says he still needs Baker to go along.

The Republican governor came to this issue reluctantly. But the Baker administration indicates it has an open mind today. When asked about Baker's level of support for Springfield-Boston service, a spokeswoman cited the administration's backing of that east-west rail study (due to be completed in the spring), as well as a Greenfield-Springfield pilot program and the additional service south to New Haven.

The nearly \$100 million renovation that reopened the long-shuttered Union Station underscores what can be done when state and federal leaders work together, regardless of political affiliation.

Guess how long that one took? Four decades. Neal, Lesser, and their allies hope viable east-west rail service can arrive at a quicker pace. Maybe not at bullet-train speed. Maybe just at the speed of government bureaucracy that can actually chug along, effectively and efficiently.

Jon Chesto can be reached at jon.chesto@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter @jonchesto.



CAPITOL UNLIMITED

JIM MATHEWS/PRESIDENT & CEO, RAIL PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION



Dining Car Shuffle: Better, But It Can be Better Still

We, RPA, blocked the spread of the box-lunch nightmare from the *Lake Shore* and *Capitol* to the rest of the Eastern trains, and we secured a promise that Western trains will keep their traditional dining service while refreshing the choices on the now nearly three-year-old menu. What happened next? A whole slew of misleading news stories. The food blog *Eater* says "Amtrak's dining cars on long-distance trains will soon be killed." (No, they won't.) The *New York Post* screeches "Amtrak blames millennials as dining cars ditched." (Not exactly.) And then the *Washington Post* runs a story with the headline "The end of an American tradition: The Amtrak dining car."

That's a shame, because it obscures a lot of hard work by tireless volunteers and the Rail Passengers Association's professional staff. In June of 2018 we were looking at all cold food, with each piece wrapped in plastic as if it came from a vending machine, served in a box with its own trash bag. And even that lame experience would only be available to First Class passengers. Instead, thanks to continuous engagement by Rail Passengers' DC team with Amtrak leaders, coach passengers will once again be able to buy dining car meals, there will be five hot entrees, and the Western trains' traditional dining service won't be touched.

Is this the full-up traditional dining-car experience? No. But are these important improvements? Yes, they are.

We had a series of in-person meetings with Amtrak over several months, which we then capped off with an "ultimatum" letter to the customer experience executive team at Amtrak in August. We laid out all of our concerns about the Contemporary Dining Initiative (which has since been renamed Flexible Dining). We objected to the cold food, the pile of plastic and trash, the lack of choice in entrees, the lack of any accommodation for special diets like vegan, low-sodium or Kosher, the poor job Amtrak has done with ensuring that today's service has enough food on board to meet even basic dining orders, and most strenuously to the exclusion of coach riders from purchasing food.

Amtrak responded with concrete steps to address the most serious concerns, while asking for our help to resolve others. And we secured a public, on-the-record commitment from Amtrak that there would be no change to the traditional dining model on the Western trains.

Does that mean we'll stop fighting? Of course not. But it is both unfair and naive to expect grassroots advocacy to completely reverse a \$2 million business decision by a railroad that remains under public pressure to break even—especially when the current law requires Amtrak to break even on food and beverage. To that end, our team spent a lot of time on Capitol Hill alerting congressional staff to our concerns, and they reacted in June by directing Amtrak to consult with all stakeholders about major changes and to seek permission before taking any steps to degrade service.

Having said that, as much as you and I personally may have liked the traditional dining service (my favorite was the fresh-grilled steak on the *Capitol Limited*) many other actual paying passengers disagree. But don't take my word for it.

A couple reporting their experience on the southbound *City of New Orleans* on a prominent online blog for railfans declared that they "liked Flexible Dining. In fact, we prefer it to the traditional full-service diners we are used to on the western LDTs we usually ride."

In another prominent online venue, younger riders declared about traditional dining service that it was "the worst part of my Amtrak experience," or "I'm sat with three boring middle-class Boomers who talked about their typical things," or "It was kind of painful to sit next to my partner across from two strangers and hope they weren't crazy." And then there was this one: "I got told in graphic detail exactly what someone would do to my body."

For these riders, Flexible Dining is not an affront but a relief.

Based on these comments and many others, I will argue—controversially, I guess—that there is no turning back the clock. But I will also argue loudly and without restraint that Contemporary Dining was not good, and Flexible Dining can be much better than it is today. Rail Passengers will keep working through Congress and Amtrak to make it better. Oh, and for those who wonder what Amtrak will do with the \$2 million they're saving? The *Silver Star* (or "*Silver Starvation*" as some of its regular riders have tagged it) will get a dining service with five hot entrees, after three years with the only options being hot dogs or pizza from the Café Car. I'll call that a win even if you won't. 🍴

America Wants Passenger Trains.



JOIN NARP AND HELP US ALL GET THE SERVICE WE DESERVE.

NARP is the largest passenger rail advocacy group in the U.S. Join today and get travel discounts, timely news and most of all, help us expand our train network.

To join for as little as \$35 per year, go to www.narprail.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Rekindling the passions of youth

The accompanying photo shows Mason Frohardt, the 7-year-old nephew of Joe Atkinson. In the foreground, at 48½", is Hancock, Iowa; Hillis siding, which the Iowa Interstate train is now passing, sits at nearly 53". It looks like Mason is just shy of both of those elevations.

Mason was offered a step stool, but he preferred to move with his train. The smile and thumbs up were completely unprompted.

One thing that came to mind during Mason's visit, Joe reports, is that even with all the "serious" operational tools in play – selectively compressed speeds, high momentum settings, a prototype-based ProtoThrottle from Iowa Scaled Engineering, and so on – the layout held Mason's interest. He was especially interested in the use of the brake: when to cut the throttle and how long to coast before applying the independent, a process that took on the challenges of a game while continuing prototypical appearances.

"Obviously, he needed some coaching," Joe says. "But if prototypical operation using those tools can maintain the attention of a 7-year-old, I think that speaks highly for its ability to entertain adults who may not have considered it in the past."

Scale model railroading has come a long way from the days when we considered an oval of track, sprinkled with green-colored sawdust and textured with lichen-covered hills, a reasonable representation of full-size railroading. But I think too many of us sell ourselves short. We accept less than we're capable of achieving under the assumption that expanding our



Seven-year-old Mason Frohardt isn't deterred by a realistic throttle or his current lack of height as he runs an Iowa Interstate train around Uncle Joe Atkinson's HO railroad. Joe Atkinson photo

horizons is too difficult, too time-consuming, too expensive, too whatever.

I won't pretend I can lay out, in four columns of text, a path forward for those sitting back in their easy chairs. But to those who are disquieted by the lack of progress on your railroads, I suggest you look again at the joy in Mason's eyes and wonder whether it's time to recapture some of that rapture for yourself.

Despite all the gloom and doom about the future of our hobby, this is indeed the best of times to be a model railroader. The selection of products has never been better. If retail prices are off-putting, go to a show or check the prices of used models online; there are bargains galore.

While working at the *Model Railroader* booth at the 2019 National Train Show near Salt Lake City, I was asked by at least two modelers who

were re-entering the hobby about how to upgrade their 1970s-era locomotives to Digital Command Control (DCC). I strongly agreed with their decision to switch to DCC but suggested they set aside the older hardware and buy a few new locomotives that are factory-equipped with DCC.

They can then decide whether the older engines are worth the time and cost of upgrading to today's detail and operating standards. My guess is that they aren't. In which case, they'll be sold at bargain prices to someone for whom basic direct current is sufficient.

Like looking at the delight evident in Mason's

expression, I could see that those returning modelers were excited by what they saw at the train show. A whole new hobby had blossomed since they'd last sampled it.

I attend myriad conventions, meets, and train shows around the country each

year. Some, like the Amherst show in West Springfield, Mass., in January and Trainfest near Milwaukee in November, are huge affairs. All offer great deals and a chance to meet many of the people who produce the products we depend on.

Inspiration is just that close. You won't find it in your easy chair. **MR**



DESPITE ALL THE GLOOM AND DOOM ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR HOBBY, THIS IS INDEED THE BEST OF TIMES TO BE A MODEL RAILROADER.
— TONY



THE OPERATOR



Nov. 10/19

ECL OPERATING DEPARTMENT

NO. 185



OPERATIONS REVIEW

by Paul A. Cutler III

This was our first Sunday operation of the winter season and it was well attended. The weather cooperated for once, and members came to the club in droves (*eight engineers!*). However, as usual, it was a frustrating 1st Trick followed by a wicked smooth 2nd Trick (except for **Al Munn**).

Operations Review: Sunday, Nov. 10th 2019, 1st Trick

The tower was staffed by **Will Baker** on the Boston Division and yours truly on the Mountain Division. **Will** arrived about 30 minutes in, but it was good thing he did as I had to make a couple trips down the stairs to fix things. We started the clock about 15 minutes late at 11:15 A.M.

Roger St. Peter, after working on building the new layout sections for half an hour, ran four trains. He was mostly on time...or at least "Amtrak On Time" (15 min. or less). **Roger** had a couple retired firemen signed up as his firemen with **Jim South** and **Jim Ferris**.

Dave Clinton ran just one train with MB-4 then departed with our lunch order (the most important job of the day).

Floridian **Larry Strumpf** got to run four trains. His first train, BS-5, had un-MU'd engines leaving Boston, and then derailed leaving the yard. Along with the delays along the line, he was about an hour and twenty minutes late getting to the Steel Mill. **Larry's** other trains were slowed by traffic, but otherwise okay (other than a minor derailment with a VIA LRC in Boston).

Engineer **Ed Carter** ran two trains with Alaska RR #34 and the NH TOFC job, HB-8. The two Alaska F-units were MU'd against each other, which delayed their departure from Cedar Hill. This led to a near head-on with another train at Mt. View Pass with mail & express train #101. The mail



train backed up and cleared at E-53 to allow #34 to pass. With HB-8 he also had a near head-on the Mountain Div., but other than that, no problems. Both trains were 45 and 30 min. late, respectively. Oh, and **Ed** has learned the importance of *reading the Train Order*. ☺

Dan Peterson ran five trains, but the first two were short runs to and from Great Lakes and Middleton. He said, "I've run two trains and haven't even gone around the layout once!" He had shorting troubles with the ECL ore hoppers

(which got exponentially worse when **Rick Pearson** ran them later). **Dan** also reported some derauling problems with the Monon passenger train (the owner has been notified).

Engineer **Rick Pearson** and Fireman **Adam Nagle** ran six trains...somehow, considering the "ore train from hell" they had. First trouble was when they passed the stop semaphore at Mt. View which almost led to a head-on at the dairy. **Rick & Adam** stopped and backed up into E-53 for the meet (and he said, "We paid a lot of attention to that semaphore for the rest of the day."). Now with the ECL ore train, it was a constant battle to get it over the road with electrical shorts every few feet. I think **Rick** spent more time pushing it than the engines did pulling it. ☺ One of the issues found later was a truck screw had fallen out from one of the ore hoppers, allowing the metal wheels to run against the metal car frame. The affected cars were Bad Ordered after the train made it to the Steel Mill.

Al Taylor ran four trains. The first, CH-2, derailed approaching E-35 in Cedar Hill and dumped a couple sand gondolas on the ground. In the process of re-railing it, the rear of the train almost ran away back down the hill, but company



photographer **Joe Dumas** was able to apply a hand brake on the caboose to prevent it. Train 43, the CP 4-6-4 train, was a little late after a break-in-two at East Middleton. However, **Al's** last two trains ran on time.

Hard-luck Engineer **Al Munn** got four trains of his own over the pike. Train #101 had the unexpected meet with the Alaska (see above). The best one was Train #58 (B&O P2K E9) missed E-59 at Bethlehem Jct. and plowed into the rear of **John Sheridan's** HX-2 at Highland Oaks. **Al** hit **John** so hard that he pushed four cement hoppers out the back of Portland Cement. When **Al** tried to pull the B&O train back with his hand, and because he had coupled to **John's** GP7, **Al**



pulled most of his passenger cars off the rail going around the curve. "Oops!" **Al!** Just wait; his 2nd Trick was worse! ☺

The aforementioned HX-2 with Capt. **John Sheridan** in command had one other significant problem. Namely, he

had ten (yes, *ten*) extra freight cars on his train. The Cedar Hill Yardmaster was in the habit of combining Tracks 2 & 3 together to form HX-2, but we've thinned down the train to where it's only one track in the yard. So in addition to HX's set outs, **John** also had HX-3's set outs. Or as **John** called them, his "anchor" he had to drag around all day. ☺

Down in Middleton, **Jay Pease** wore a couple hats as MX-3 and Yardmaster. He finished MX-3, but reports that the switch for King Coal in West Middleton shorts every time you run an engine through it. Also, there is a dead spot on Track 4 near switch Red 4 (investigation confirms a 6" long dead rail), and the lights for E-7 are out. Otherwise, the yard ran fine, says **Jay**.



Chris Barlow operated BX-7, and repeated the same error he made last time: he forgot to read his Train Order and left Boston through E-21. This meant that he, once again, didn't switch out Bryant City Freight House. ☺ As he rounded the bend at the end of Leg 3, he realized he was on the wrong main and tried to crossover at E-33 at Minot Jct. His train, "*Derailed all over the place.*" **Chris** did hold up BS-5 at Richmond Mills (*we'll have to do something about that with the schedule*), but at least he didn't leave any switches open ("*Which is a real improvement for me,*" he said). **Chris** finished up around 3 hours early.



Fred Lockhart ran Cedar Hill (both freight and passenger) on the 1st Trick. He reports that E-366's red & green LED's are reversed, and that the Monon train derailed leaving the station due to a low glad hand on a magnet. **Fred** also fessed up to the HX-2/HX-3 combo. ☺

Trainmaster **Bob Farrenkopf** said, "*I gave out no trains from hell.*" *Yeah, they just turned to evil later!* Still, all trains were handed out and run (except for the Extra). **Bob** suggested that we have more room to write down engineer names on the Trainmaster sheet (easy to do).

Boston Dispatcher **Will Baker** held down the fort up in the tower for me a couple times (which I appreciate). He said that engineers should pay more attention to their train orders, and please remember to call for a switch to be clear after using it.

As Mountain Dispatcher, **yours truly** was grateful for the eight engineers we had this session. If we hadn't had so many, the numerous derailments and delays would have sunk us. As many problems as we had trains still left on time all shift. If there had been just 4 engineers, train orders would have been handed out well after the train was due to leave (and that would be bad).

Operations Review: Sunday, Nov. 10th 2019, 2nd Trick

After a hectic lunch break resetting the layout, **yours truly** tried to get **Jay Pease** to be dispatcher. He wised up and ditched me before the clock even started. His loss because the operation went so well, I was actually kind of bored. ☺☺

Rick Pearson and **Adam Nagle** returned to run seven trains (which is pretty busy with seven engineers). When they got the same ECL ore train again, **Rick** threatened to "*...no longer be my friend,*" if he had the same problems with it. Fortunately for me, I had pulled off the troublesome cars during the break and we are still friends. ☺ They spent the rest of the time dodging other trains around the layout. **Adam** said it was "*Very interesting and fun.*"



Larry Strumpf ran one train, #502, a commuter. He then pulled the eject lever and went home for the day.

Ed Carter ran five trains for the 2nd Trick. He had a caboose pop off, but it was quickly re-railed and off he went. **Ed** didn't have any head-ons this time, but with freight MH-3, he did miss his exit at Bethlehem Jct. **Ed** got well over a train length into the passenger leads before realizing his GPS was on the Fritz.

Engineer **Peter Palica** ran three trains while teaming up with new applicant **Eric Mercer** as his fireman. **Peter** said it was a bit of a "comedy team" since he is also still learning. **Peter** let **Eric** run the throttle with trains #716 and #725 while he handled the radio communication. All three trains ran pretty well, but the Monon F-units were MU'd against each other when it left Middleton. *How did that happen? They're both A-units and were coupled back to back...*

Local freight JX-2 was tackled by **Chris Barlow** because he's one of the few guys that will crawl under the layout into Hudson Falls. He completed all the pick-ups and most of the set outs. He found it much easier to switch the area when he remembered that he could throw the Essex Jct. yard switches remotely (E-100 to E-103). His first choice of engine had way too much momentum in it and couldn't reliably stop over a magnet. ☺ **Chris** reports that the track was, as usual, very dirty in Hudson Falls.

Al Munn continued his run of bad luck as he ran just two trains. The first, #510, had a funny problem at Bryant City. After he made the station stop and started to accelerate, the train decided all by itself to go into reverse. Then he had "the train from Hell" (this seems to be a theme). This time, it was the CP 4-6-4 passenger train. Things were going well until he was passing switch E-2 at West Middleton. The



suspicion is that a low glad hand got wedged into a frog at high speed. The result was three passenger cars lying over on their sides quite a

distance from each other. To make it more entertaining, **Al** lost control of the engine; it went all the way through East Middleton before he could stop it. After re-railing the cars

(and hosing out the remains of the passengers), **Al** continued on and loaded new passengers at East Middleton. The train then uncoupled at speed going around Hudson Falls. During the re-coupling operation, disaster struck: a sleeper rolled over onto the inside track and wiped out another car load of passengers. **Chris “Hulcher” Barlow** was handed a step stool so he could reach the derailment as it was “...in the most inaccessible place on the layout.”



Dan Peterson got to run five trains. The only problem was with his last train, the VIA LRC train. After it arrived in Boston, it was supposed to be “turned” to run back to Middleton. **Dan** decided to run the train backwards all the way instead of turning it around. When he got to Middleton, Yardmaster Jay Pease said, “Dan, why are you backing up?” Dan replied, “Isn’t that the way it’s supposed to be?” Um, no. ☺

Will Baker decided to run some trains instead of dispatch and got five trains over the pike. Three of them were actually early, and the other two were nearly on time.

John Sheridan ran HX-1, first time in a long time. It was so long since he ran it, the route changed. After he figured out the way to get there, the first thing he did was hit a building. Apparently, someone moved one of the temporary Steel Mill buildings a little too close to the Larson Branch mainline (and that’s when the swearing started). **John** complained about a car that was too light (he said it was full of helium but I think he’s exaggerating). He also said he would have run HX-3 as well, but he couldn’t find the cards. I told him they were in the box, but he couldn’t find the box in question (it was the cardboard box on the glass countertop). To be fair, I should have put the cards out in plain sight, but things get rushed when you only have 45 minutes to reset the layout due to the late start of the 1st Trick.

Jay Pease returned to Middleton as Yardmaster. He would really like a shelf with a lip on it to put things on. With car cards, bamboo skewers, radios, throttles, and clipboards in use, more places to put things would be much appreciated. He said he spent most of his time there picking up things he dropped (and that gets old).

Up in Cedar Hill was an old rookie **Dave Clinton** as Yardmaster. See, he used to be the Cedar Hill Yardmaster back at the old club, but he’s never run a yard here at the new club.



His first comment was that the lighted panels made things much easier. **Dave** pointed out that one of my NH coaches had badly strobing interior lights (because that car has no capacitor). He said the yard worked great.

Trainmaster **Bob Farrenkopf** said, and I quote, “Ditto.”



As usual, the second trick always goes better. All the problem cars and engines from the first trick have been removed, and everyone has been reminded how things work. It went so well that I had almost nothing to do other than throw

switches. If only all operations went so smoothly. ☺ Still, what made it work was the number of engineers we had. When we have enough, things go very well indeed. When we are short on people, well, that’s when dispatching becomes thrilling and exciting...and nobody wants that. ☺



Paul Cutler III 



ANNUAL HOLIDAY AUCTION

Monday, December 2nd



Cash, checks, Credit Cards accepted
Preview of items 1/2-hour before meeting



Junk Food Jollies



When: Tuesday, December 10th
Where: Editorial Offices, 11 Hancock Rd., Hingham
Time: Any time after 6 pm
Who: **All members and applicants welcome**



Come and enjoy hot mulled cider, cookies, crackers, cheese and lots of other not-so-good-for-you food! A time for camaraderie with your fellow members away from the RR Club...but still in a RR atmosphere!

About 8 pm, we'll enjoy movies, slides and DVD's made by the photographers in our group.

Come and have fun with your friends.

