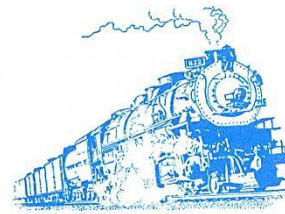


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



FEBRUARY 24, 2020 ■■■■■■■■■■ **VOLUME 40** ■■■■■■■■■■ **NUMBER 2**



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr.
“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Boston <u>Globe</u> & <u>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.....	Brian Solomon

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. ©2020
E-mail: daveclinton@verizon.net Club phone: 781-740-2000. Web page: www.ssmrc.org

VOLUME 40 ■■■■■ NUMBER 2 ■■■■■ FEBRUARY 2020

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

Chief’s Corner.....	3
Contests	3
Clinic.....	3
Editor’s Notes.....	11
Form 19 Calendar.....	3
Members	12
Memories	4
The Operator.....	16
Potpourri.....	5
Running Extra.....	12

ON THE COVER: Pictures from our recent Operations, Sunday, February 9th. (Joe Dumas)

FORM 19 ORDERS

FEBRUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, February 24th 8 p.m.

MARCH BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, March 2nd 8 p.m. GROUP PHOTO

SPRING SHOW & OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, March 7th 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Sunday, March 8th 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

D.C.C./EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, March 12th 8 p.m.

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, March 21st

MOVIE NIGHT

Monday, March 23rd 7:30 p.m.

MARCH B.O.D.

Monday, March 30th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Rick Pearson** on winning this month's 50/50 raffle!

For the April Business Meeting: "Word Find" puzzle 20-4; another favorite by Al Taylor. Extra copies in contest rack in train room. Good luck and don't forget to include your name!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Progress on the railroad

Work on the benchwork of the new section is coming along, as expected. Most of the sub-roadbed has been installed, with roadbed and turnout blocks being prepped so they are ready when needed. Planning for electrical needs, turnout controls and scenery is being planned, so whatever is needed is built in now and not an afterthought.

The new trolley sections I mentioned last month have been wired and will be installed before our upcoming show. They are designed and built to be removable for maintenance, if needed, as they pass through a very tight section of the railroad.

The Scenery Committee held a meeting this month to go over the areas of the existing railroad that need completion. Their thought is to finish what we have built before we go on to any new sections; all members present were in agreement with that thought process. The exception would be the planning of structures needed for the new section and some pre-construction of same. Having structures pre-built will expedite the scenery process once it gets started. The chairman reports to me that the meeting resulted in renewed enthusiasm for scenery.

The Electrical Committee has added LED lighting (under counter strip lighting) to the Boston Div. mainline under Cedar Hill Arrival/Departure yard, where scenery work has been going on for a while. What a difference the lighting makes, as it sets the Boston area apart from Cedar Hill accentuating the multi-level affect.

What Else

During the show the new section will be stored along the back of the railroad, after the Show we will move it back to the work area and start roadbed, track and wiring.

OH!...the Show: as in the past, I will be assigning tracks to members signed up to operate. So if you have a train on the railroad, that won't be used during the show and don't mind removing it, that would make space in our yards for trains during the Show. Any questions--see me before removing your train. Clean up for the show includes track cleaning, general housekeeping of the railroad room, checking scenery for cobwebs and dust... etc., etc., same old, same old stuff.

In closing I want to THANK all members who have been actively working on the railroad, it's important to the process and the progress. That is it for this month, as always your questions and comments are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Our next Clinic will be **Thursday, March 12th** as we follow an "every second month" schedule. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

FEBRUARY 2015 (5 years ago)

- In the middle of "Winter from hell": 110"+ snow. MBTA shuts down Greenbush line, strands hundreds everywhere.
- Business meeting cancelled.
- Proposal to build layover facility for Amtrak *Downeaster* trains in Brunswick, Maine.
- Only 4 of the 40 new MPI HSP46 locomotives in service on MBTA, due to traction motor bearing warranty work.
- Amtrak commits \$12-million towards \$500-million price tag of rehabbing Chicago's 90-year-old Union Station.
- Railroaders' Museum of Pennsylvania opens new roundhouse in Altoona, PA.
- Mass D.O.T. completes purchase of 37 miles of Housatonic RR ROW from Pittsfield, MA to Canaan, CT.
- Maine Narrow Gauge Museum plans move to Gray, ME, from its 25+ year occupancy of a 10-acre waterfront property in Portland, which is to be re-developed.
- N&W 4-8-4 #611 moves closer to operation, with successful hydrostatic boiler testing.
- President Obama announces establishment of "Pullman National Monument" in Chicago, honoring America's first planned industrial town.

FEBRUARY 2010 (10 years ago)

- Bowser to produce Alco C-630M locomotives.
- Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway joins S&P 500 and S&P stocks, after acquiring BNSF Railway.
- Final \$35 million awarded to complete extension of *Downeaster* service to Brunswick, ME.
- Jon Delli Priscoli, owner of Grafton & Upton RR, reopens portion of defunct 16-mile shortline.
- 75th anniversary of delivery of *Flying Yankee* train.
- Amtrak announces plans to buy 1,200 passenger cars, 334 locomotives and 25 high-speed trainsets over the next 14 years.
- Amtrak reintroduces real china, table linens and glassware to the *Coast Starlight*, replacing disposable alternative in use.
- Bay Colony shuts down Millis line, with closure of last customer, GAF building products. Watuppa Branch only remaining line operated by Bay Colony.
- Amtrak's *Ethan Allen Express* begins stop at Castleton, VT, instead of Fair Haven.
- State of NH in talks with MBTA to open stop at Plaistow on the Haverhill Line.
- CSX begins discussion about expanding Worcester, Westboro, E. Brookfield and W. Springfield operations and eliminating Allston yards.
- Amtrak to begin work on replacing Niantic River Bridge on March 1st.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR files to abandon or sell 241 miles of track in Maine.

FEBRUARY 2005 (15 years ago)

- President proposes Zero funding for Amtrak, a familiar refrain in Amtrak's 34-year history.
- Renovations at Red Line's South Station reveal concealed, beautiful, blue and white terrazzo-tiled sign for "South Station Under".
- CSX purchases 100 of GE's ES44DC "GEVO" locos.
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway shows new "Nike" logo and announces name going forward will be "BNSF Railway".
- Amherst Railway Society's "Big Train Show" in W. Springfield named #1 of top 3 train shows in the nation by Model RR Industry Association.
- City of Belfast, ME, votes to terminate Belfast & Moosehead RR's lease.
- Ex-QBT SW9 #20 sold to Ed Clark's Hobo RR in Lincoln, NH.
- Partnership between CN, CP and NS builds on agreement made in 2004 by NS and CP to share each other's lines in the Northeast.
- First of new Kawasaki double-decker coaches delivered to MBTA.
- Branchline Trains introduces first R-T-R "heavyweights".
- Edaville changes ride from 5 ½-mile trip to 2-mile trip, to make room for 13-home subdivision in are of Edaville's original entrance and station.

FEBRUARY 2000 (20 Years Ago)

- VIA Rail Canada announces start-up of seasonal "Bras d'Or" service on Cape Breton in Nova Scotia.
- 1205th Railway Battalion moves from Connecticut Southern property to Pioneer Valley RR in Westfield, MA
- Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority takes first step in replacing 50-year-old "temporary" Mansfield railroad station.
- Amtrak takes delivery of first "Pacific Surfliner" cars for San Diego-San Louis Obispo service.
- RailAmerica, Inc. completes acquisition of RailTex, Inc
- UP brings back "Winged Shield", to be applied to 1,000 new SD70M locomotives.
- Amtrak's "Acela Regional" service begins, using Amfleet cars and "Mighty Mouse" AEM7 electric locos.
- MBTA and Hingham reach agreement to build Greenbush Line tunnel under Hingham Square.

FEBRUARY 1995 (25 Years Ago)

- First year we choose Sunday for the March Show.
- Maryland State government rescues struggling Western Maryland Scenic RR, with funding and purchase of line.
- Maine's Aroostook Valley RR goes out of business.
- Wisconsin Central buys Ontario's Algoma Central Rwy
- ICC approves UP's acquisition of C&NW.
- Santa Fe's shareholders approve BN takeover.
- MBTA plans to move Mansfield station out of downtown, due to selectmen's negative vote on expanded parking.
- Amtrak's *Montrealer* discontinued. State of VT sponsors substitute train, *The Vermonter*, with service ending at St. Albans, VT.

•New England Central begins service over ex-Central Vermont rails. CV property sold to RailTex, owner of New England Central.

FEBRUARY 1990 (30 Years Ago)

•Long-time editor of *Trains*, David P. Morgan dies.

•Amtrak takes delivery of 70 new Material Handling Cars (MHC).

•Amtrak considers putting “RoadRailers” behind its passenger cars.

•Valley RR of Essex, CT takes delivery of brand-new, Chinese-built 2-8-2 steam locomotive.

•CP Ltd. buys remaining shares in Soo Line, to become 100% owner.

•MBTA opens new station called “Dedham Corporate Center”, near Rte. 128, on Franklin Line.

•Fore River Railway purchased by National Railway Systems of Castle Rock, Colorado.

FEBRUARY 1985 (35 Years Ago)

•Administration proposes to eliminate funding for Amtrak for FY1986.

•Paragon Park at Nantasket Beach sold for condos.

•Big fight at Conrail between sale to NS or going public with stock sale program.

•B&M Pacific #3713, located at the Museum of Science since 1969, craned off property and sent to Steamtown in Scranton, PA.

•EMD introduces SD60 locomotive.

•All 53 leased commuter cars from Toronto’s GO Transit taken out of service and returned.

•VIA Rail Canada announces route restorations, including Montreal-Halifax with the *Atlantic*.

•Grand Trunk Rwy abandons trackage on Commercial Street in Portland, ME, after connection to Maine Central made at Danville Jct., ME.

•Show held at “North High School” in Weymouth for the first time. Had to completely cover gym floor with cereal box cardboard to protect wood.

POTPOURRI

COLORADO RAIL TRANSIT passengers are apparently a pretty honest group. The Denver-area Regional Transportation District, like many systems, uses honor-system ticketing, but performs random checks for tickets. In 2018 just 0.12 percent of those using RTD commuter trains were found to be evading fares. On the RTD’s light rail system, 1.67 million riders were checked, and 27.469, or about 1.6 percent, did not have a valid fare, according to an RTD report. First-time fare evaders are given a warning and removed from the train; subsequent violations can draw a fine of up to \$106.50 and be suspended from the system. More than 3,200 citations were issued in 2018. The RTD

estimates it loses about \$850,000 annually from fare evasion. It has considered adding turnstiles and gates, but a 2011 study showed the equipment would cost \$175 million to install and \$16.7 million annually to operate. (TN)

•••••

THE NATION’S LARGEST railroads remain on track to meet the final deadline for full implementation of the critical safety technology—Dec. 31, 2020—with several railroads already operating the technology across their entire required PTC footprint, AAR said. For the remainder of this year, the Class I’s will continue to focus on testing to ensure that PTC systems are fully interoperable and work seamlessly across operations as railroads regularly run across each other’s tracks. As of Dec. 31, 2019, Class I’s had invested \$11.47 billion in the development, installation and implementation of PTC and had the technology in operation across 53,001 miles of the 53,676 miles of PTC-required track. As required by law, all seven railroads had installed all necessary wayside, back office and locomotive hardware; had all spectrum in place; and completed all necessary employee training as of Dec. 31, 2018. (RA)

•••••

CANADIAN PACIFIC, the lone Class I railroad to see volume growth in 2019, reported record revenue and earnings for the fourth quarter and full year. For the quarter, operating income rose 2%, to \$890 million, as revenue grew 3%, to \$2.1 billion. Earnings per share, adjusted for the impact of one-time items, rose 5%, to \$4.77. The quarterly operating ratio was 57%, up 0.5 points from a year ago. For the full year, CP’s operating income surged 10%, to \$3.1 billion, as revenue grew 7%, to \$7.8 billion. Adjusted earnings per share rose 13%, to \$16.44. The operating ratio for the year was 59.9%, a 1.4-point improvement. (TN)

•••••

CANADIAN PACIFIC CEO Keith Creel is excited about his railway’s return to Eastern Canada with its \$130 million acquisition of the 481-mile Central Maine & Quebec Railway. CP sold off its routes east of Montreal, including what became the CM&Q and J.D. Irving short lines Eastern Maine Railway and New Brunswick Southern, as part of a retrenchment in the mid-1990s. “The world’s changed in 25 years,” Creel said Wednesday on CP’s quarterly earnings call. “The railroad’s changed, it’s evolved.” Creel spent time on the CM&Q recently and came away impressed with CP’s shortcut across Maine linking Montreal with

Saint John, New Brunswick, via connections with the Irving short lines. “Commercially, the customers are extremely excited to have service alternatives which they simply have not been afforded in over two decades,” Creel says. “We’ll be able to offer the shortest routes from the Maritimes to Montreal, Toronto, Chicago, and Western Canada that will be truck-like reliable and truck-like competitive on a service standpoint and obviously much more compelling on a cost standpoint.” CP aims to provide one-day service between Saint John and Montreal and three-day service between Saint John and Chicago. Creel compared Saint John to Vancouver, British Columbia, which is Canada’s busiest port and is critical to CP’s success. CP has the shortest and fastest routes from Vancouver to major cities in Canada as well as to Chicago and other points in the U.S. Midwest. CP would have the same advantages at Saint John, he says. “Saint John could be the Vancouver in the East,” Creel says. The Port of Saint John is currently undergoing a \$205-million modernization and expansion that will nearly triple its container handling capacity to 320,000 TEUs by 2023. The project is funded by the port, the Canadian federal government, and the province. The Port of Halifax, the busiest in Atlantic Canada, last year handled nearly 550,000 TEUs. Canadian National, the only railroad to serve Halifax, also serves Saint John. CP plans track upgrades that will permit faster and more reliable service. “The most important thing we’re working on ... is investing in the physical plant to get it up to a CP standard,” Creel says. CP will spend \$75 million over the next three years to upgrade the CM&Q to FRA Class 3 track, which is good for 40 mph, up from 25 mph today. The 262.7 miles from St. Jean, Quebec, on the outskirts of Montreal, to Brownville Junction should be a 40-mph railroad by the end of 2021. Track speed on Eastern Maine Railway and New Brunswick Southern on the 189.5 miles from Brownville Junction to Saint John is 25 mph. A CP spokesman declined to comment on whether CP would invest in track improvements that would enable higher speeds on the connecting short lines. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE MBTA’S financial oversight board has approved a \$1.1 million, one-year pilot program to add eight daily trains to Boston’s Fairmount Line, the first step in the agency’s ambitious commuter rail transformation program. An additional \$100,000 will be available to market the new service. The pilot starts May 18, 2020, in sync with the spring

schedule changes. In November, the Fiscal and Management Control Board approved a plan to add high-frequency service on three lines of the regional rail system with new electric multiple-unit trains. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE DURANGO & SILVERTON Narrow Gauge Railroad has completed the restoration of a K-37 2-8-2, the largest type of locomotive to ever run on the Denver & Rio Grande Western’s famed narrow gauge route. On Jan. 24, D&SNG crews fired up No. 493 after an extensive restoration that saw it converted from being a coal-burning locomotive to an oil burner. The railroad made the decision to convert one of its former Rio Grande Mikados from coal to oil following a wildfire that closed the railroad for more than a month in 2018. No. 493 last ran in 1968 and in recent years had been on display in Silverton. The D&SNG last ran a K-37, No. 497, in the 1980s, but later traded it to the nearby Cumbres & Toltec Scenic for a smaller K-36. One other K-37, No. 491, is also running at the Colorado Railroad Museum. (TN)



Jack Foley caught one of the re-built GP40MCs at South Station this month. Nice paint scheme—kind of like the B&M’s “Dip Blue”.-Ed.

●●●●●●
SOUTH STATION PASSENGERS, consider yourselves warned: the daily troop through the train station is about to get more than a little messy. A combination of two significant changes—a huge construction project and the installation of subway-style fare gates at the platforms—threatens to crate years of bottlenecks at the most critical times of a rider’s commute: the rush from the train to the office, and back again to catch the train home. The amount of disruption coming to South Station is unprecedented. The construction of a nearly 700-foot office tower over the open-air section of the tracks will require officials to close most of the doors leading from the station to the platforms, forcing riders to funnel through a handful of doors bunched together in the western end of the station. And much of the exterior concourse between the indoor lobby and the train platforms will be cordoned off as early as July, requiring officials to build out a concrete extension that essentially fills

in parts of the tracks, in order to fit more passengers. Then, to top it off, sometime by this fall the MBTA and its commuter rail operator, Keolis, plan to install fare gates on the outside area near station platforms, similar to those on the subway, which will add yet another obstacle, as travelers sprint for their trains. And for some riders, it doesn't end there: the upcoming rebuild of the Massachusetts Turnpike in Allston will probably affect service on the fastest-growing line into South Station, from Framingham and Worcester. (BG)

●●●●●●



THE CONWAY SCENIC RR will be running seven trains a day on a 90-minute interval between North Conway and Attitash Ski Area from

February 15th to 29th. This is the first time the railroad has tried this service and they will be using their ex-New Haven Budd RDC1 #23, which they named "Millie". (B. Solomon)

●●●●●●

GREAT NEWS!

A non-profit foundation has purchased Pennsylvania's storied East Broad Top Railroad and plans several events on the railroad in 2020, with the aim of resuming regular operation in 2021. The EBT Foundation Inc., backed by prominent rail-industry figures and longtime East Broad Top fans, will own approximately 28 miles of railroad, as well as the narrow gauge line's shops, rolling stock, and equipment. The purchase includes right-of-way from the south end of the concrete arch bridge over the Aughwick River below Mount Union to the road crossing in Wood Township. The East Broad Top is a National Historic Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"This is the best possible outcome for the railroad, which has been in my family for two generations," said Joseph Kovalchick, whose father, Nick Kovalchick, purchased the East Broad Top Railroad & Coal Co. after its coal mines closed in 1956. "It is with a combination of pride and relief that we pass the torch in its second reincarnation." The Kovalchicks will continue to own coal-company property that had been jointly owned with the railroad. "When my father bought the company, it

was never his intention to scrap the railroad. At the time he was the only one to stand for the EBT, and his role in the history books is assured. My generation has struggled to balance the need to preserve this national treasure with running it as a business, and I take pride in our role in its survival. But it is clear that a for-profit business model is not sustainable. Our faith in the new model is reflected in both the sale and the Kovalchick family's ongoing role on the board of the new non-profit."

Brad Esposito, a 20-year veteran of Genesee & Wyoming's Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad, led the effort to purchase the EBT, along with longtime EBT enthusiasts David Brightbill, Lawrence Biemiller, and Stephen Lane. Esposito will become the East Broad Top's general manager. Backers include three rail industry and preservation heavyweights: Wick Moorman, former chairman and CEO of Norfolk Southern and former CEO of Amtrak; Henry Posner III, a former Conrail manager who is chairman of the Iowa Interstate Railroad and the Railroad Development Corp., of Pittsburgh; and Bennett Levin, a retired mechanical and electrical engineer who owns the Juniata Terminal Co., which operates two Pennsylvania Railroad E8 diesel locomotives and three private cars.

Esposito says the EBT Foundation has a three-part mission: to preserving and operating the East Broad Top as a steam railroad; to educating visitors about the role of railroads in local and national history; and, to promote local and regional tourism and economic growth. "The East Broad Top is a unique national treasure unmatched anywhere in the United States," says Esposito. "It has been impressively preserved for over 60 years by the Kovalchick family. We are excited to pick up the torch and ensure that the railroad is preserved for future generations. "Our close partners will be the volunteers of the Friends of the East Broad Top. They have contributed countless hours of work and significant amounts of money to help preserve the historic fabric of the EBT since 1983. "Also, we look forward to working with the Rockhill Trolley Museum." The all-volunteer trolley museum dates to 1960 and operates over the former Shade Gap Branch of the EBT.

"The East Broad Top is a remarkable survivor from the age of steam railroading," says Moorman. "I'm

delighted to have the chance to be a part of its revival, both for the preservation of such an important part of our industrial heritage, and for the economic benefits that it will provide to an area of Pennsylvania that is so closely linked to the railroad industry.” Levin notes that the EBT runs through a bucolic landscape almost unchanged since the early 1900s. “The railroad’s historic fabric is an important component of the region’s industrial archaeology, and the educational possibilities here are almost limitless.”

The new organization’s advisors include Linn Moedinger, former president of the Strasburg Rail Road — one of the most successful tourist railroads in the U.S. — and Rod Case, a partner at the consulting firm Oliver Wyman who leads its railway practice. Among the organizations providing support is the Allegheny Ridge Corp., which manages the region’s state-designated Heritage Area. The corporation “is thrilled to participate in the rebirth of this great asset,” says Astride McLanahan, a longtime board member of the organization. “The EBT is a jewel in the Allegheny Ridge Heritage Area and its revitalization will bring economic opportunity to this rural community.”

Built from 1872 to 1874 to haul coal to a new iron furnace in the center of the state, the 33-mile-long East Broad Top survived the collapse of the local iron industry at the turn of the 20th century because the top-quality coal it carried had found other markets, thanks in part to close cooperation with the Pennsylvania Railroad. When the last of the coal mines closed in 1956, the East Broad Top was purchased by the Kovalchick Salvage Co. of Indiana, Pa. Despite being in the scrap business, the company left the railroad intact and in 1960 reopened a portion for steam-powered tourist trains that proved widely popular. The 3-foot gauge railroad is the only surviving original narrow gauge line east of the Rocky Mountains. The railroad’s shops complex, which dates to the 1880s and was greatly expanded from 1905 to 1907, is among the most complete early-20th-century industrial facilities anywhere in the U.S. Still in the railroad’s roundhouse in Rockhill Furnace are six steam locomotives built for the EBT by Philadelphia’s Baldwin Locomotive Works between 1911 and 1920. They share the building with the unique M-1 gas-electric, constructed at the railroad in 1927 with

plans and parts from Philadelphia’s J.G. Brill Company, a leading streetcar manufacturer, and Westinghouse Electric. Other EBT equipment includes passenger cars believed to date to the 1890s and numerous steel freight cars built in the EBT shops. The East Broad Top was the only American narrow gauge to convert to an all-steel freight car fleet.

Remarkably, track remains in place over nearly the entire 33-mile main line, which connected the coal mines in Robertsdale to the Pennsylvania Railroad at Mount Union. The former PRR main line is now Norfolk Southern’s east-west route between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh.

“The East Broad Top Railroad is a unique historic asset that is a national treasure representing our area’s rich railroad heritage,” says state Sen. Judy Ward, who represents southern Huntingdon County. “The sale of this railroad to this group of longtime EBT enthusiasts who are committed to preserving and operating it as a steam railroad is very exciting news for the region because it preserves this irreplaceable treasure for future generations while opening up significant tourism and economic development opportunities.” Says Posner: “Aug. 13, 2020, will be the 60th anniversary of the East Broad Top’s first reopening, which took place during the bicentennial of the founding of what became the ‘twin boroughs’ of Orbisonia and Rockhill Furnace. This was an era of revised expectations in the face of the decline of the railroad industry nationwide. At that time Nick Kovalchick could not have imagined the possibility of reopening the entire line, but fortunately our industry’s renaissance has helped create an environment in which this important and audacious project can succeed. We are honored to follow in the footsteps of two generations of the family that has made this all possible.”

“This will be a monumental undertaking,” says Esposito, “and I encourage anyone interested in helping us to join the Friends of the East Broad Top and come work on buildings, track and equipment.” The railroad’s new website can be found at eastbroadtop.com. (TN)

●●●●●

BRAD ESPOSITO has worked for the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad for 20 years, and has been a member of the Friends of the East Broad Top for just as long. Now, he's combining those extensive track records to become the general manager of the East Broad Top Railroad, which has been purchased by the non-profit EBT Foundation Inc. Esposito was the last employee hired by the Pittsburg & Shawmut Railroad before it was absorbed into the Buffalo & Pittsburgh by shortline holding company Genesee & Wyoming, and is the last remaining employee from the P&S roster. He spent 12 years on the Buffalo & Pittsburg as a locomotive engineer, followed by eight years in management. If anything, his roots with the EBT run even deeper. "My grandparents brought my dad here in the '60s," he says. "I came here in the '80s, and I brought my kids here in the 2000s." Esposito says the East Broad Top wants "an image of renewal, a fresh start," and that work will begin immediately on several fronts. The EBT has been closed since late 2011, and before operations can resume, the railroad will need to overhaul track and equipment, including locomotives and passenger cars. A fire-suppression system will be installed in the historic machine shops and roundhouse, and several structural stabilization projects will begin in the railroad's Rockhill Furnace complex. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE FIRST OF AMTRAK'S 28 new Acela trainsets, scheduled to enter service throughout the Northeast Corridor in 2021, will be leaving from Alstom's facility in Hornell, N.Y. on Monday, Feb. 17 for high-speed testing at the Transportation Technology Center near Pueblo, Colo. Nine months of dynamic testing will include the trainset's pantograph, railway dynamics, tilting, traction, slip/slide and wayside protection, brakes, and train control management systems. Once complete, the trainset will return to Alstom for installation of its interiors. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE READING & NORTHERN Railroad has resolved its tax dispute with the borough of Jim Thorpe and will resume passenger rail service to and from the community, the railroad announced. The first trips resulting from the agreement will come Saturday, Feb. 15, as part of Jim Thorpe's Winterfest. The R&N had shut down its Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway operation, based in Jim Thorpe, in November after the borough and its school district sued the railroad, saying it owed money from a local amusement tax. The suits were

dropped in November, paving the way for the agreement announced last week. (TN)

●●●●●●
A PARTIAL WALL COLLAPSE in the Hoosac Tunnel is forcing detours of Pan Am Railway's traffic around the bore in western Massachusetts, Pan Am partner Norfolk

Southern is advising customers. All trains operating between Mechanicville, N.Y., and Ayer, Mass., are affected. The NS advisory says Pan Am's engineering department is currently evaluating the situation and NS will provide updates as they become available. Customers should expect traffic delays of at least 48 hours. The 4.75-mile, single-track tunnel dates to 1875, when it opened following 24 years of construction. Repairs are expected to take at least a month. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE MASSACHUSETTS FACTORY of China's CRRC, the world's largest rail equipment manufacturer, is expanding and hiring workers as the company continues to deal with production setbacks and legislative restrictions. A CRRC MA official said the company is about 60 cars behind on its production schedule for cars for the MBTA; it is also behind schedule on an order for Philadelphia's SEPTA. (TN)

●●●●●●
JUST DAYS AFTER releasing a newly restored K-37 2-8-2 locomotive that has been converted to burn oil instead of coal, shop crews at the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad are starting to convert another 3-foot gauge steam locomotive. On Jan. 24, the D&SNG fired up No. 493, one of the largest types of locomotive ever built for the Denver & Rio Grande Western's famed narrow-gauge operation, following an extensive overhaul. Since then, the railroad has been testing the locomotive and on Tuesday it hauled a 13-car passenger train in one of its biggest challenges yet. D&SNG General Manager Jeff Johnson tells *Trains News Wire* that the locomotive has performed flawlessly. "The initial test runs for No. 493 have gone well so far, with no glaring issues or additional repairs needed," he says. "With each subsequent test run, the crew will let No. 493 run a further distance up the line, and with increased speed." The restoration of No. 493 now gives the D&SNG seven operating 2-8-2s, making it home to the largest regularly operational fleet of steam locomotives in North



America. No. 493 last ran in 1968 and in recent years had been on display in Silverton. The D&SNG decided to convert one of its former Rio Grande Mikados from coal to oil following a wildfire that closed the railroad for more than a month in 2018. The shop team will be putting those same techniques to use when it converts another locomotive, K-28 No. 473, to burn oil. (TN)

●●●●●●
NORFOLK SOUTHERN is closing its historic, 137-year-old Locomotive Shop in Roanoke, Va., transferring all locomotive work to its Juniata Shops in Altoona, Pa. NS predecessor railroad Norfolk & Western began operating the locomotive shop, then Roanoke Machine Works, in 1883. The railroad is also closing its associated Roanoke Distribution Center, which supports the shop as well as other mechanical department facilities across its system. “The Roanoke and Juniata locomotive shops are operated as heavy repair and overhaul shops,” NS said in a memo to employees. “Likewise, the company operates distribution centers in Roanoke and Altoona that store and distribute mechanical parts to locomotive shops system-wide. As [we continue] to evaluate our operations and network, [we] determined we could no longer support two separate heavy repair facilities and distribution centers. The company has experienced a 48% decline in coal tons shipped since 2008, with further declines expected. In addition, we are operating with a leaner locomotive fleet, down 22% since late 2018, reducing the locomotive maintenance and repairs required to operate safely and efficiently ... [The] decision to close the Roanoke Locomotive Shop represents a historic change for the company. The shop once built steam locomotives. We honor and recognize the proud heritage of employees who work at the Roanoke Locomotive Shop. At the same time, we recognize that we must transform how we operate our company to keep pace with today’s ever-evolving markets and business environment.” (RA)

●●●●●●
RAIL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER ALSTOM will acquire Montreal-based Bombardier Transportation in a deal worth 5.8 to 6.2 billion Euros (\$6.28-\$6.71 billion), Alstom has announced. It is Alstom’s second attempt to grow in an effort to compete with China’s CRR, the world’s largest manufacturer of rail equipment. A previous attempt to merge with Germany’s Siemens, announced in 2017, was stopped by European Union regulators last year. The Alstom-Bombardier talks were first

reported in January; the Canadian firm had also reportedly talked with Siemens, Japan’s Hitachi and a Chinese firm in an effort to find a new home for its rail unit. Airbus and the government of Quebec bought out Bombardier’s commercial aviation program just last week for a reported \$591 million. Bombardier’s only remaining business will be its private jet division, traditionally its most profitable division. Bombardier was facing more than \$9.3 billion in long-term debt, and took a \$350 million charge in its fourth-quarter 2019 financial results for problems related to long-overdue high-speed trainsets for the Swiss Federal Railways and the London Overground. (TN)

●●●●●●
VIA RAIL CANADA has laid off 1,000 workers as a result of the blockades of rail lines at locations across Canada, joining about 450 Canadian National workers laid off earlier this week. Some of the Canadian passenger carrier’s plans to partially restore service were thwarted Wednesday as new blockades appeared. The blockades are part of nationwide protests over a pipeline project in British Columbia, which is opposed by some members of the First Nations group whose land the pipeline would cross. (TN)

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

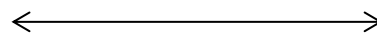
TRAINS
Fighting Rail Wear
Beyond Big Boy
The Overshadowed Tunnel
Railroad Vision 2020: After Hunter
RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Baggage and Express Ops: Part 1
Up on the Roof
Photography
How to shoot your projects

MODEL RAILROADER
How to Model Embedded Rails
DCC Corner
More Solutions for Shorts

Trains of Thought
These are the “good new days”

PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL (2020-1)
Bennett Levin’s Visit to Pennsylvania Legislators
Saga of the Boston-Albany Beeliner
Trail Blazer: Riding the Old Lackawanna
The Endless Quest to Restore Passenger Service to Scranton, PA.



News sources: [Boston Globe](#), [Boston Herald](#), [Trains "Newswire"](#), [Railway Age](#), [Progressive Railroading](#), [Railpace](#), RRE "Callboy", "The 470", [Patriot Ledger](#), [Wall Street Journal](#)

THE HISTORY OF "MOVIE NIGHT"

In the spring of 1979, when I was an applicant and John Governor was Show Chairman, he asked me to run the 16mm projector for the movies that he'd gotten to show during the Club's annual Show; it was only held in the spring. The dealer show was on Saturday only and the Club (in Weymouth) was open both Saturday and Sunday. That year's show was at the East Weymouth Congregational Church's social hall in the basement of the church. There was a room under the staircase, where I was showing the rented movies, per John's instructions.

Since the members couldn't view the movies, as they were busy with the show and Club activities, we showed the movies to the members on the Monday night following the Show. I was bitten by the movie bug and took over renting the movies for our shows after that—maybe that's why I was let in to the Club: because I was willing to take that on? I got so "into it", that I purchased a used 16mm projector at a camera store in Lynn, so that we didn't have to ask Mark Hall borrow one from his school each year. During that time, several railroads had their own film libraries, as did Kalmbach Publishing, and would loan their movies free of charge.

The railroads phased out their libraries in the early 80s and, luckily, Al Taylor put me onto the National Railroad Historical Society's film library in Philadelphia, where a lot of the RR films had gone. He was a member and we were able to take advantage of a 40-page listing of railroad movies. During this time, I had purchased a copy of some of my favorite films and, finally, Kalmbach informed us that we were the only organization borrowing their two semi-comedic films and would we want them for \$10. Needless to say, they became part of my film library! "Model Railroading Unlimited" and "The Magic of Model Railroading" have entertained us for so many years!

By the late 90s, 16mm films were "a thing of the past" and it was very difficult to get movies. Our last "Movie Night" was in March 2001. We were tired by

Sunday night, by this time in history; the dealer Show had moved to Sundays and the set-up and clean-up of the rented facilities and the Club open both days was exhausting. As my mom used to say to me, "You're not a spring chicken anymore!" That was for sure.

One thing that made the night "special" was Al Munn and John Governor (later Barry Doland) would prepare popcorn for all who wanted a bag. The evening was a great "un-laxing" time, after the hassles and anxieties, caused by promoting ourselves and the hobby to the general public for two days in-a-row. Some of the movie scenes evoked snide comments, and then there would be raucous laughter and popcorn would be all over the floor. We all were a lot younger (and wilder) in those days!

Three years ago, someone asked about bringing back "Movie Night", and not related to the Show. The Board thought a good idea, so here we are: this year's date is Monday, March 23rd. The format has changed, with a couple of "shorts" in the beginning of the night and then a feature-length movie shown. Of course, the 16mm projector is no more and the DVDs are shown on a Sony

"surround-sound" projector, with six speakers so that we old folk can hear it!



Last year's movie was a favorite:

Silver Streak, with lots of silliness. This year we will be a little "darker", with the

1985 movie *Runaway Train*, starring Jon Voight, Eric Roberts and Rebecca DeMornay. Mark your busy social calendar and see you then...for popcorn and fun, courtesy Al and crew and Sony!



EDITOR'S NOTES

1. What a nice **surprise** at this month's Business Meeting, when Jack presented a 40th Anniversary sheet cake to me, as Editor of this publication. Needless to say, we all enjoyed the delicious, decorated



chocolate cake with buttercream frosting— my favorite! Thanks, Jack, from me and all present. ☺

2. Since we have such a good time with the “Trains ‘n___” theme, another date has been added this time the second Saturday of June. Called “Trains ‘n Tans”, it will be the usual “free-running” time, starting at 11 a.m. Stay as long as you want. Lunch will be around 1:15. This year’s date is June 13th, a very famous date in Canadian history! ☺
3. Excellent news about the **East Broad Top RR** in central Pennsylvania. I included the whole Trains Newswire article, as this is wonderful news. This railroad is a real “treasure”. I have visited on three separate occasions and was very sad, when it closed in 2011. Problem is, it’s in the “middle of nowhere”; it’s not on the usual “tourist” route. This development demands another visit before passing into the next world!
4. In less than two weeks, we will be opening our doors to the public and dealers to show off what we do here. Let’s all put an effort in to spreading the word with flyers and signing up for duties during those two days, whether it’s selling tickets, running trains or talking up the Club and hobby to our visitors. Thanks for being a member!

..... *David N. Clinton*

“A friend loves at all times, and kinfolk are born to share adversity.” (Proverbs 17:17)

MEMBER NEWS

GROUP PHOTO: We will be taking a member’s “Group Photo” at the March Business Meeting. It has been many years, since we’ve done this, so please try to attend the meeting and wear an SSMRC shirt, if you have one!

Bill Garvey is at St. Joseph’s Rehab center, 215 Thatcher St. in Brockton. Hopefully, Bill, this will be “just what the doctor ordered” and we’ll see you back at Building 51 real soon!

Coley Walsh is doing best as possible, as he goes through chemo. He has been able to spend a short time at the Club a couple times of the week, during

the day, but does not have the energy he wishes. Our continued thoughts and prayers for your recovery, Coley.

Eric Tedeschi has fully recovered from his rotator-cuff surgery and is back at the Club. Good going, Eric...nice to have you back!

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:

Joe Dumas..... March 4th
Bob England..... March 7th
Larry Strumpf March 13th
Peter Palica..... March 28th



RUNNING EXTRA

A skyscraper is headed for South Station in downtown Boston. Work starts next month

BOSTON GLOBE
JANUARY 2020



Tower is a slap in the face to every preservationist

The front-page article “Next at South Station: hard hats, de-tours” is a slap in the face to every preservationist who values Boston’s heritage. Virtually everyone — including the MBTA, Governor Baker, and the Legislature— realizes that South Station will soon need as many as eight additional tracks to accommodate more frequent commuter rail service in the face of rapidly increasing traffic gridlock. So what do they plan to do? Plant an ugly, ultramodern office tower atop one of Boston’s most iconic landmarks, which joined the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

South Station, with its magnificent architecture, deserves to be a stand-alone building, not dwarfed by what looks like a nearly 700-foot ICBM perched on its roof.

RICHARD S. PRONE
Duxbury

The writer represents Duxbury on the MBTA Advisory Board.

(Following is an excellent letter to the Editor in the Boston Herald dated 2/4/20. Well-said Rich!-Ed)

Save Historic South Station

The recent decision to bury historic South Station beneath a 685-foot office tower is an embarrassment to all those who value Boston's charm and heritage. Opened in 1899 and designed in neoclassical architecture, South Station became the busiest railway station in the world by 1913. In 1972, it survived an attempt by the Boston Redevelopment Authority to demolish the building. In 1975, it was added to The National Register of Historic Places. Now, once again, developers threaten the stature and prominence of this iconic Boston landmark.

It is mystifying how an artist's rendering of this abomination surfaced around New Year's Day, with a postscript reading "Oh, by the way—construction begins at the end of the month." No public hearings or comment period, just a few glitzy pictures trying to sell this monstrosity to the citizenry. It doesn't take an architect to determine that the glass office tower and South Station's granite go together like a black tuxedo and madras pants.

The MBTA is committed to building at least six more tracks in South Station. They will be located on the east side of the terminal, between the old Stone & Webster building and the post office property. Dump the tower, and expand the South Station Headhouse eastward adjacent to the new tracks. Built in a matching motif, the new combined terminal will be spacious and bright with easy access to tracks. And, the new bus terminal could easily be joined to the concourse on the Atlantic Avenue side.

Boston's identity centers around its' historic buildings. Don't make the same mistake New York City made when they buried Penn Station under Madison Square Garden. South Station deserves to stand alone, not in the shadow of an ugly and needless office tower.

Richard S. Prone
MBTA Advisory Board Representative
Town of Duxbury

The Amtrak Funding Déjà Vu—Again

Written by Frank N. Wilner, Capitol Hill Contributing Editor
Railway Age 2-13-20

Color it neither Democratic nor Republican. It's Amtrak—or, more precisely, the Amtrak déjà vu. Since its 1971 creation by Congress as America's national intercity passenger railroad, Amtrak's survival has been a near-run thing dependent on a never absolutely certain—but always occurring—bipartisan congressional willingness to cough up subsidy.

So here we go again with a White House budget recommendation to Congress short on essential passenger rail dollars that, following the scripts of past tragicomedies, most likely will be revised upward—but realistically concluding with a tintinnabulation rather than a crescendo of financial support. Ah, the travails of the mythical Sisyphus cruelly visited upon passenger rail doers and dreamers! This latest innumerable chapter in the chronology of Amtrak financial travails records President Trump's budget recommendations for the 2021 federal fiscal year beginning Oct. 1. Despite perpetuating already trillion-dollar federal deficits, the budget's proposed spending on Amtrak seeks a 50% cut—for both the Washington, D.C.-Boston Northeast Corridor (NEC) and Amtrak long-distance (L-D) routes—from current 2020 fiscal year spending levels. Chopped from \$700 million to \$325 million would be NEC funding; and from \$1.3 billion to \$611 million would be the funding cut for L-D trains, with a phaseout of L-D trains following.



Amtrak is not alone among modal entities facing Trump-recommended budget cuts, with federal support for

aviation, ports and highways also on a slicing table, such as \$2 billion less in federal highway spending and a slashing of \$500 million in transit grants. Those reductions also are likely to be revised upward by Congress. As for the proposed Amtrak cutbacks, the President's budget narrative says, "Long-distance routes continually underperform, suffering from low ridership and large operating losses of roughly half a billion dollars annually. Amtrak trains inadequately serve many rural markets while not serving many growing metropolitan areas at all."

Notwithstanding aspirations, Amtrak is neither tone-deaf to political reality nor the data its market research generates, some of which validates the President's budget narrative. As Amtrak Senior Executive Vice President Stephen Gardner recently told *Railway Age*, while market research confirms a place for L-D trains, "the sweet spot for passenger rail is the 350-mile corridor, connecting major metropolitan areas and communities around them, over which we can produce multiple trips per day at convenient arrival and departure times." Those being subsidized know better than to demand, and Amtrak's response to the Administration's proposed funding cuts is diplomatic: "Amtrak is delivering safe, compelling products and services. We are poised to grow, by providing more people with sustainable, frequent, high-quality mobility. To make this happen, we believe an increase in federal funding for a new fleet, renewed infrastructure and service expansion is needed. We look forward to working with the Administration, Congress, our state partners and other stakeholders to consider these proposals more in depth."

Amtrak reported that for its fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2019, it set a ridership record with 32.5 million passenger trips, and has been trimming substantially its deficits as its revenue increased almost 4% to \$3.3 billion. Amtrak's NEC ridership was 12.5 million vs. 4.5 million on its 15 L-D routes for the previous fiscal year. Amtrak says just 15% of its riders choose L-D service; and of those, only 3% ride end-to-end. Amtrak also provides service on state-supported routes that are not affected by the federal budget.

This is not Amtrak's first rodeo with Executive Branch passenger rail budget hawks. Republican Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush went far south of President Trump, recommending a zeroing-out of Amtrak funding, while Democratic President Bill Clinton recommended a 23% cut. In a previous budget recommendation, President Trump sought a similar 23% cut that didn't pass congressional muster, either.

Given Republican fealty to President Trump, as evidenced in this month's Senate trial on impeachment, there is still reason to ponder whether the Republican-controlled Senate will block a Democratic-controlled House from its anticipated approval of a status-quo Amtrak appropriation—or, as Amtrak supporters would prefer, a substantial increase, given that Amtrak's "wants" list is defensible as an inventory of "needs" rather than a catalogue of "wants." In fact, the more realistic outcome in this election year is for *both* Democrats and Republicans in Congress to transfer Trump's basement-bound Amtrak budget recommendations to an up escalator.

Jim Mathews, President and CEO of the Rail Passengers Association, which calls itself "a voice for more than 40 million rail passengers," told *Railway Age*, "While we're confident Congress will once again reject this proposal, we plan on actively fighting back against this attack on the long-distance network—the only passenger train service for 140 million Americans in 220 towns and cities." Mathews cited a Trump "irony" of eliminating L-D service in favor of NEC funding "on the same day his Department of Transportation gave the NEC replacement Hudson River tunnels a low priority rating. We all know that building redundancy for the existing North River Tunnels [part of the \$13 billion Gateway Infrastructure Program], which currently carries around 450 intercity and commuter trains every day, is the most time-sensitive rail project in the country."

Solar panels have yet to generate energy

By Amy McKeever

HINGHAM — More than a year after crews finished solar panels over the West Hingham and Nantasket Junction commuter rail parking lots, the hulking structures are still not generating any electricity.

Paul Heanue, general manager for the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant, said he is waiting for the solar panels to be turned on so the utility can begin to buy electricity from True Green Capital Management, the private firm operating the panels, which were completed in October 2018.

Heanue said at the time that the utility was in a dispute with the MBTA over liability issues, but he said this week that the issue had been resolved and the town was ready to buy electricity from the panels when it begins to be generated.

"This project has dragged on for so long. ... When they call me and say they're ready to go I'll sit up and pay attention," he said.

Ilias Garidis, the operating partner at True Green, said to turn on the solar panels the company needs to finish the



GREG DERR/THE PATRIOT LEDGER

■ Solar panels at the West Hingham commuter rail lot on Fort Hill Street installed in 2018 have not been turned on.

financing phase of the project. He expects the work to be completed in the next few months.

The panels will generate solar power to be bought by the Hingham Municipal Light

Plant. Garidis said he expects the panels to produce about 1.7 million kilowatt-hours of electricity in their first year of generation.

The MBTA said in 2018 it expected to generate \$35

million in revenue for each parking lot where the panels are installed over the next 20 years.

Reach Amy McKeever at amckeever@wickedlocal.com.



Passengers boarded the Amtrak Downeaster in Saco, Maine.

Downeaster reports record number of ridership in 2019

By Caroline Enos
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The Amtrak Downeaster carried a record-breaking number of passengers last year, according to the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority.

About 575,400 passengers rode the Downeaster, which runs from Brunswick, Maine, to North Station in Boston, which the rail authority said was a 7.8 percent increase in ridership from 2018.

"These results are particularly impressive," said the authority's chairman, John Melrose, in a statement. "We are committed to the continued growth of the Downeaster service and are working hard in 2020 to improve/expand transportation alternatives to further enhance mobility to our citizens and support economic

growth for Maine Businesses."

The last record-breaking year for ridership on the Downeaster was in 2017, when 546,056 passengers rode the train, according to the rail authority. Ridership dipped in 2018.

The company's marketing director, Natalie Bogart, said the Downeaster also experienced record ridership growth in nine out of the 12 months in 2019.

August was the highest ridership month in Downeaster history, Bogart said. The 60,944 passengers who rode the train that month also marked the first time Downeaster ridership passed 60,000 passengers in a single month, she said.

Repeat riders, improved reliability, and more trains to Freeport and Brunswick led to the record-breaking number of pas-

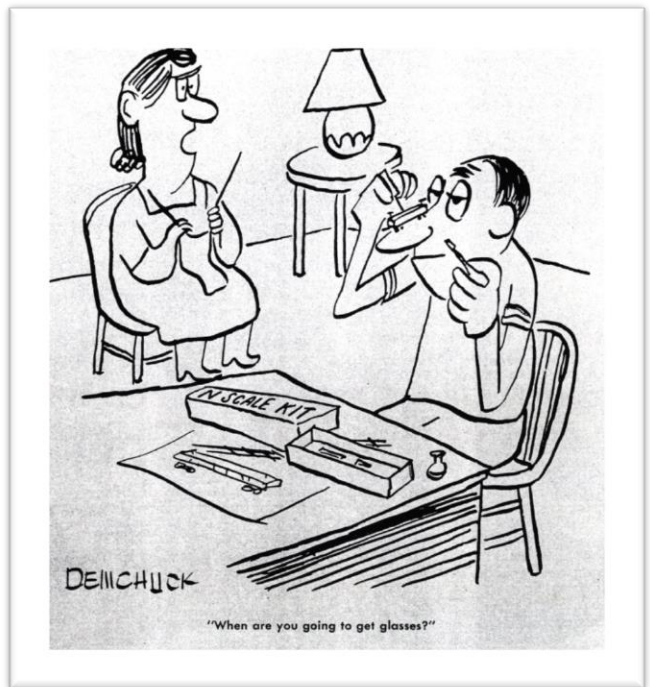
sengers, according to the rail authority. Passengers also ranked the Downeaster among the top Amtrak lines for food service, friendliness, and overall satisfaction, the company said.

"Amtrak Customer Satisfaction score of 91% suggests that people are not only riding the Downeaster, but are finding it to be enjoyable as well," the company said in a statement.

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority is a public transportation authority created by the Maine state Legislature that has an agreement with Amtrak to operate the Downeaster rail service, according to its website.

Caroline Enos can be reached at caroline.enos@globe.com. Follow her on Twitter @CarolineEnos.

AP FILE PHOTO



PRESERVATION NEWS

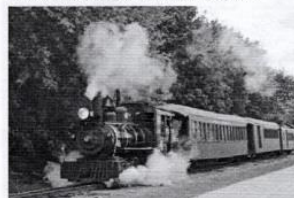
Maine Narrow Gauge plans for future in Portland

By Jerry Angier

Secretary, Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum Board of Trustees

A lot has happened at the Maine Narrow Gauge in 2019. Most importantly, as many know, the Museum is staying at its location on the Portland waterfront. MNG carried almost 20,000 passengers during its annual Polar Express trips to the North Pole. We also have established a very positive collaboration with the Wiscasset Waterville and Farmington Railway Museum in Alna, Maine for the preservation and display of some of our valuable pieces of Maine two foot gauge railroad history.

Back in 2014, the MNG came to the conclusion that its future lay outside the Portland area. After putting out a relocation RFP to communities throughout Maine, the board decided that the proposal from the Town of Gray would be our best fit. The following three years were spent acquiring a right of way from Central Maine Power and purchasing surrounding property in order to have space for a station, museum and engine service facilities along with a restoration shop. It was projected this project would cost us between \$10 and \$12 million to complete.



A typical MNG steam-powered train. (Courtesy MNG)

At the time we received from Central Maine Power a donation of two miles of the former right of way of the Portland and Lewiston Interurban, we planned to rehabilitate it for operation of our two-foot gauge railroad. While there were a few visible problems, it appeared to us then that we could achieve that goal. As time went on, it became apparent through conversations with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection that circumstances had changed from the time of the Interurban abandonment in 1933 and 2018. The DEP said "no" to our plans. After consideration of a piece of legislation, the idea of our building on the right of way still came up against a stone wall. We had also asked the Town of Gray for \$500,000 from surplus town funds to help us get underway. In a town referendum, the proposal was voted down by residents. As 2018 came to an end, our prospects in Gray looked bleak indeed.

That year we had carried almost 60,000 passengers along the shores of Portland's Casco Bay. This number came to the attention of city officials who realized what an asset our two-foot gauge railroad was as we preserved and displayed "History In Motion." This realization was a turning point for us.

As 2019 dawned, we drew up plans to not only stay in Portland but to build a station at the Ocean Gateway area on the city's East End, and also build a storage facility at the end of track by the Back Cove Bridge. This was a workable financial challenge for us to accept with the help of our many partners in the greater Portland community.

Our right of way lease is with the State of Maine Department of Transportation. We worked with them to extend the lease to 2049, with a right to renew. That gave us property that was twenty-six wide over almost all of our track length. The former Grand Trunk Railway line at one time had a small yard near the bridge over Back Cove, and we discovered in the lease an area that was one hundred feet wide – certainly wide enough for an enclosed and heated two-track storage facility with an outside track for additional storage.

Working with a member who is involved with city planning in Massachusetts, we went to the City of Portland Zoning Board of Appeals and the City Planning Department for the approvals necessary to begin construction of our dream. As this is written we are waiting one last planning department approval. We will then put a shovel in the ground and start building our station. In a discussion this writer had with Portland City Manager Jon Jennings in January 2019, I was told he wanted the station completed by July 1, 2020. No problem, I thought, as it was well over a year away. Progress grinds slowly. We anticipate starting construction in February 2020.

During this past year, planning has come together for a capital campaign to raise \$2 million for this building project – a much more achievable goal than the \$10+ million we were looking at in Gray. We have launched our capital campaign and already have some significant gifts from local citizens as well as interested parties throughout the United States. Callboy readers who wish to help with a donation, may donate on line with PayPal at www.mainenarrowgauge.org/funding-the-future/ or can contact me at jerry4ins1@gmail.com or by mail at 15 Piper Road, Apt. K108, Scarborough, ME 04074. The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum is an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization and all gifts are tax-deductible. We are grateful for the donations we have already received from several Mass Bay members.

These are exciting times for the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad as we enter 2020 and look forward to many Mass Bay RRE members joining us as part of "History In Motion."



A rendering of the planned Maine Narrow Gauge "Ocean Gateway" station on the waterfront in Portland. The traditional design of the station is modeled after the Everett Railroad's depot in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania. (Courtesy of Maine Narrow Gauge)





THE OPERATOR



FEB. 9/20

ECL OPERATING DEPARTMENT

NO. 186





OPERATIONS REVIEW


By Paul A. Cutler III

We had a very nice turn out for a Sunday operation session as the weather cooperated (for once!), meaning it was cold but clear with no snow or rain. There were ten, yes, ten mainline engineers signed up. Plus, we had seven more members in yards, locals, and other slots. It did mean there were long waits between trains for the engineers, but several locals and yard positions were available (*hint, hint*).


Operations Review: Sunday, Feb. 9th 2020, 1st Trick

The tower was staffed by **yours truly** for both divisions during the first shift. Hair-pulling was kept to a minimum due to the number of engineers. If we'd only had three or four, this would be a different story. We started the clock 20 minutes late (not good).


First up is engineer **Al McCarty**. He ran three trains – all with problems. The first one (ML-1) left the last car and the caboose in Middleton; the cars had to be flown in to Great Lakes by **Peterson** Air Lines. The second, 524 out of Middleton, caused some excitement in the yard. **Al** walked up to Cedar Hill's Stationmaster and said that he was taking out the next passenger train. The Stationmaster set him up, **Al** put in the DCC address, and tried to run it – yet nothing seemed to happen. Meanwhile, in Middleton, 524's *Downeaster* set was running back and forth, either shorting out against a switch () or trying to ram an RDC (). ☹️ **Al** was then directed to the correct yard and the train ran without any trouble. Next, but not least, was MH-3. Not really **Al's** fault, Middleton lined him up to go to Great Lakes vs. Cedar Hill...which he did, and ran a train length past the last switch. Unfortunately, the only way to correct the error was to back all the way into the yard and then try again. An attempt was made to throw switch E-3 to save **Al** some time, but instead switch E-33 got thrown by the yard crew (which led to me getting a radio call asking for E-33 green...and I was rather puzzled why it was red). **Al** left Middleton on time the first try but left one hour late on the second attempt. ☹️

Applicant **Jake Gibson** flew in to run three trains as well with 701, 716, and 525 (all passengers). He reports that the VIA LRC train was, "slow, slow, slow." **Jake** left on time but arrived 15 min. late. With train 716, it left on time but got to Middleton 12 min. late. The last, 525, found that the local freight left M-6 thrown. This threw the RDC's into Essex Yard and into the local freight train.  When asked how many passengers were killed in the collision, **Jake** replied, "Not many, actually. It was a soft hit."

Peter Palica ran one train with commuter train 502. He left on time and arrived 20 minutes late in Boston.

Al Munn got to run three trains, too: 510, 58, and 547. With B&M RDC's on train 510, **Al** missed a switch in Boston yard on his way to Track 6 and slammed into the rear of an Amtrak Superliner train on Track 4.  It made a bit of a mess in the yard.

Doug "No Problems" **Buchanan** was lucky and managed to run four trains: CH-2, 29, BM-3 and HM-4. The only issue he had was that the LNE steam engine had a little "stop and go" problem leaving Boston. However, once it made to Bryant City, the engine ran fine after that (must have warmed up by then).

Jesse Collins and son **Caleb Collins** teamed up to run two trains with 725 and MS-9. Train 725 got in a little late to Cedar Hill, but that was due to getting held up leaving Middleton due to a late freight train passing by. MS-9 was uneventful until arriving at the Steel Mill when **Jesse's** ore train bumped into the rear of the parked coal train behind the Steel Mill. 

With two trains operated, **Larry Strumpf** had some fun with 34 (Superliners) and HB-8 (TOFC). The brass diesels on HB-8 hesitated at diamonds (?), but the worst potential issue was the S.P.A.D. ("Signal Passed At Danger") at E-53 with train 34. The semaphore was set to stop and train 34 continued past it by about half a train length before halting. A good thing **Larry** got it stopped, too, since train 101 was just coming around the Dairy siding the opposite way. (*Whew!*)

The engineer of train 101 was **Dan Peterson**, who also ran 43, HB-2 and BH-1. Other than a potential head on at the Dairy with **Larry** and flying in the last cars of **Al McCarty's** train, he had no problems at all...in the first trick.

All the way up from Virginia, Honorary Member **Ross Kudlick** not only made an appearance but also ran LM-4, MB-4, BH-7, and 533. He's the one that found E-33 thrown against him at Minot Jct.

Ed Carter had the honor and privilege of running the coal train, BS-5, which gave him all kinds of trouble. It started with a helper steam engine on the rear, got to Bryant City and the train broke in half. He moved the helper to the head end, which then derailed at Minot Jct. and Ruggles. After the second derailment, he pulled off the helper and ran it with one engine. *Later, the engine tested and ran fine, so it may not have been re-railed properly the first time.* Then **Ed** got held up by BX-7 in Richmond Mills. When finally arriving at the Steel Mill, BS-5 tried to plow through a cardboard temporary mountain that was left behind by the Scenery Committee. This immobilized the train, requiring **Ed** to crawl into the tiny access area to fix it. With UP steam train 734, **Ed** left Cedar

Hill and was supposed to take E-59 red to avoid the siding at Highland Oaks. However, he missed that part of the train order. It wouldn't have mattered except HX-2 was in the way. They had an "almost" collision in downtown Highland Oaks (and no doubt scaring the heck out of both the UP 4-8-2 crew and the local freight engineer sitting in his Geep; *they probably had to burn those seat cushions*).

Down in Middleton Yard, **Savery Moore** wore two hats as both Middleton Yardmaster and operating MX-4. In the yard, some of the trains were on time, some were late. With MX-4, he had trouble with the switches. Specifically, Blue 8 and Blue 9 will not close all the way in either direction. Other switches in East Middleton throw very slowly, as if they are not getting much voltage to the switch machines. The points of the switches are also dead at various times due to dirty contact; bond wires really should be added from the heel of the point to the adjacent stock rail. Frog power should also be checked down the East Middleton switch ladder as he had to push his switcher through most switches or "gun it".

On the other end of Middleton, **Bryan Miller** did some work on MX-3 and assisted **Savery** when it got busy. He pulled the pick-ups and hadn't got to the set outs, yet.

On local BX-7, **Chris Barlow** was having a marvelous time; so much so that he figuratively threw the coal scoop into the firebox in frustration. **Chris** started the day okay (other than delaying train BS-5 at Richmond Mills. *I gotta try and fix that*), but in Essex Yard his throttle just decided to quit working properly. It gave him weird displays and wouldn't move the train. After ten minutes of struggle, he decided to take a time out before he Gronked his throttle into the concrete floor. At the end, he grabbed another throttle and ran LM-2 without further incident.

Running on the Mountain Division, peddler HX-2 with **Jay Pease** at the controls started out fine, but had throttle problems later on. The switch at Highland Oaks that goes into Hallmark and Ginger Rail needs some work as every car derailed going through it when thrown. He also had a derailment when turning his train on the wye at White River Jct. The "black hole tunnel" is pretty inaccessible for **Jay**; **Savery** managed to reach it from the Middleton side. Later, as **Jay** ran the train back down the west leg, the train derailed several cars approaching E-57. Fortunately for **Jay**, taller-than-average **Jake** was able to reach the wreck site from on top of a step stool. The next issue was that both Fine Furniture and Portland Cement were off their foundations to the point where they fouled the freight cars on their sidings. That and a few other minor derailments filled out his day.

Up in Cedar Hill Passenger, Stationmaster **Paul Cutler, Jr.** got all the trains in and out of the station 100% on time...well, by Amtrak's policy of 15 minutes late as still being on time. Still, that's very good for us; things went quite well. In fact, **dad** managed to turn most of the trains around for the second shift. He even took a shot at running HX-4, the Cedar Hill local freight and did a bunch of pick-ups, too.

Bob Farrenkopf handed out all train orders as Trainmaster. **Bob** did pull a fast one on **Al Munn** by handing him the Form 19 for BX-7 instead of an actual train order. *Maybe he was just testing you, Al?*

All alone in the tower as dispatcher, I only had to make a couple trips down the stairs to straighten things out. Things went surprisingly well, considering the usual problems with the first trick. Again, this was due to the large number of engineers we had; no matter how late a train got, the next train always left on time.

Operations Review: Sunday, Feb. 9th 2020, 2nd Trick

Hey, guess what? I was not the dispatcher for the 2nd trick! Can you believe it? **Jay Pease** volunteered for the job, and he actually meant it. I stayed with him in the tower for training purposes and he didn't run screaming into the sunset. ☺ I consider this experiment a great success. *Huzzah!* Once again, we started the block about 20 minutes late.

During our lunch break **Fred Lockhart** arrived and during 2nd trick, he ran Cedar Hill Freight as Yardmaster. He classified CH-2, and wrote down a troublesome car on the TOFC job that came in. Otherwise, he didn't find any trouble and all the work got done.

Peter Palica gave it another go by running trains MB-4 and BH-7. The first was okay, but BH-7 had some derailment and uncoupling issues with one of the TOFCs. **Peter** also reported the same hesitation going over diamonds that **Larry** reported from the 1st trick. The most newsworthy event happened at West Middleton. What started out as a test by the dispatcher to see if **Peter** was paying attention to the signal at E-7 became all too real when we had a passenger train appear in front of him and head his way. E-6 was thrown in front of **Peter** to stop him in case the signal didn't. It worked, but only until E-6 was cleared by persons unknown and he continued on his way...right into the path of the passenger train. After some frantic radio messages, the path was cleared without a collision. ☺

Jesse and **Caleb Collins** ran three more trains with SM-2, 43 and HB-2. **Caleb** was on the throttle and **Jesse** was handling the radio. They had trouble selecting the first train, SM-2 at the Steel Mill using a duplex radio throttle. I plugged it in, selected the train, and they had no problems the rest of the session. **Jesse** does need a headset as it was sometimes difficult to get his attention over the background noise of the layout room.

Dave Clinton, after heroically sacrificing his 1st trick throttle time to order and pick up all our lunches, ran 701 and, because we were so loaded with engineers, Extra 7413. Passenger 701 was a little slow climbing the hill at West Middleton but was otherwise okay. Extra 7413 was sent out a little early this time, and managed to get around the layout with only one minor delay for a meet at the Steel Mill.

Engineer **Ed Carter** ran four trains over the pike with 510, 58, 533 and ML-3. Three of his trains were uneventful, but 510 required the hand of Zeus to appear and grab the B&M RDC's before they smashed into the nose of the Amtrak F40PH in Boston. **Ed** lost control just as he was entering the yard and found the switch was thrown for track 4 when he wanted track 6. Down came the hand (👉) to whisk the RDC's away from danger.

Dan Peterson had trouble with every train he had to run. He had to plug in and try to acquire them at least twice before it would work. After that, it would work fine for the rest of the run. Train 100 was fine, but with 716, he was told he was being put into the siding at Mt. View Pass via E-54. "Okay," he said, and went right on by White River Jct. station. Only when he got to E-53 did he think, "Hey, was I supposed to stop back there?" Apparently the several angry passengers on the platform (and on-board his own train!) waving their fists at him was not a big enough clue. Better still, **Dan's** next train was 725. Leaving East Middleton, he forgot to stop at West Middleton, meaning those passengers that missed their stop at White River and got off at West Middleton got hosed again when **Dan** left 'em behind. I'm telling you, it's hard to get good help these days. **Dan's** last two trains were freight and had no problems.

Ross Kudlick ran 34, 524, 525, and 547. He reported problems with the speed matching of the Amtrak *Downeaster* set with its powered Cabbage that caused a couple derailments in the yard, both in Boston and Middleton. Turns out it was a momentum issue (since fixed). Otherwise, **Ross** had no trouble at all.

Four-train engineer **Doug Buchanan** said that the VIA LRC train he ran was quite slow and had difficulty keeping to the 60mph scheduled time. That's probably due to the high-friction design of the old LRC coach trucks. With his last train, he had a multi-car derailment at White River Jct. He had real trouble selecting addresses wirelessly; plugging in went okay.

With the record of five trains run, **Jake Gibson** had the controls of 502, 29, BM-3, MH-3, and SB-6. On train 29, the Amtrak Superliner, he had a break-in-two entering Cedar Hill station. **Jake** also had three derailments with the steam power right in front of Middleton on SB-6, the C&O coal drag. The other three trains he ran were on time without any real problems.

Chris Barlow returned to BX-7 and finished it up in about ten minutes. Next, he took on Hudson Falls and JX-2. He would like some way to see the magnets in Essex Yard from the pit in Hudson Falls. *I'm just not sure how to do that; some kind of camera and display?* **Chris** didn't have the same throttle problems he had with the 1st trick, but then he was using a different throttle and was using the tether in Hudson Falls.

Middleton Yardmaster **Savery Moore** was fine. Trains were really close to on time, and he finished up MX-4 and most of MX-3. **Savery** reports a bad short at West Middleton on the switch for the coal tipple. As soon as an engine hits the switch, it shorts. Switch Silver 4 doesn't throw all the way and caused a car to go one way and the engine to go down the other. Also, he had a slow rolling boxcar. No, not like you think. It slowly rolled over sideways as it was being pulled out of the Middleton Shops siding. It leaned over about 60 degrees, hung there for a moment, and then eased over the rest of the way.

At Cedar Hill Passenger, Stationmaster **Paul Cutler, Jr.** said that all the trains were on time or real close to it. In the paperwork, the list of switches-to-throw have three errors (I'll look into it). Since **dad** was bored, he went back to work

on HX-4 between passenger work. He said that the switch for the Auction House had some trouble throwing, and the one for the RIP track had to be pushed over at first (then it worked fine). Lastly, the coal tipple track in the house in Cedar Hill has a gauge problem. The expansion and contraction of the layout causes these rails (that are only glued to plastic I-beams) to flex significantly and way out of gauge.

Bob Farrenkopf returned to be Trainmaster, and handed out all train order and the extra. He did a much better job keeping the dispatcher informed of who got what train order during the 2nd trick.

Up in the tower **Jay Pease** got his first taste of dispatching during an operation session. "I had a good time," he said, and "I'll do it again." It took him a while to figure out the paperwork, and he had a lot of fun with the sound effects box, but he nailed it down eventually.

As Chief Dispatcher, I had a grand time helping out **Jay** in the tower. It's refreshing to look at the job with new eyes to see improvements that can be made. It was great to see some fresh blood try it out. Not that I don't like dispatching, but I'd like to do something else once in a while (*hint, hint*).

Anyways, it was a great turnout for operators. I've never had so many engineers sign up before. Thanks to all who showed up and we'll do it again in April!



CONNECTIONS

Where Will His Journey Take Him?

BY KAREN HEATH
Boston Globe

Every Sunday at 4:19, my 9-year-old son and I race down the outbound platform of the commuter rail station. In the summer, our sandals slap against the concrete as we sprint. In the winter, puffs of our breath form and disappear behind us. My son hates wearing coats—the zippers and tight cuffs trouble his body—but I carry one for him, just in case the bitter air changes his mind this time. (The answer so far: no coat.)

We won't board this train. Instead, my son needs to be at the very end of the platform, alongside the engine as it thunders into place. We wait there, stunned every time by the noise, the vibration of that massive steel machine. In any other context, loud noises assault him—sometimes even my toothbrush bothers his ears—so I am always amazed that he can tolerate this clamor. He points out what makes each train distinctive (the size of the windows, the number of double-decker cars), and he is lit with pleasure. He takes a video of each train, so later he can savor the replay countless times. Then the engine leaves the rest of the cars down the track, clacking by us, picking up speed. We watch until the last car vanishes, and for a moment we gaze at the emptiness where the train used to be.

Then we bolt for the other side—down the platform, up the stairs, across the pedestrian bridge—because the inbound train comes soon. My son leads—*run, Mommy!*—turning back to make sure I am completing my part correctly each time. The sameness of our visit makes something right within him. I suppose rituals soothe most of us that way: for my son, the ritual is a requirement.

Since we are here every Sunday, some of the conductors recognize us. They are a kind tribe, nodding in greeting, giving a thumbs-up. I used to wonder if my son's fascination came from imagining himself in that role. Such forecasting seems unavoidably wired into being a parent: We picture the child who is good at math as a future scientist, the articulate one as a lawyer. And so for a while, I pictured *conductor or engineer*. But in truth, when I consider the tracks on which my son's life will move forward, I have no idea what we'll find around the next bend. No parent really does, of course, but for many parents raising children with disabilities, that curve in the road is frightening; it can be so much harder to imagine what destinations the world will make possible.

I know now that greetings from the conductors are not what my son is here to collect. It's just the machine itself that he wants, in all its predictable majesty. The inbound engine pulls in, and we witness its loud arrival and departure. Then my son turns away happy, something within him answered.

On the drive home, he scrolls through his library of videos, his fingers touching the screen as if he could join the train itself. Sometimes from the back seat he asks me: *Mommy, why do I love trains so much?* We try out possible answers: The vibrations in the core of his body? The fact that he knows what will happen each time? And then the question drifts away, unanswered. I am, finally, fine with that. There will be other answers I'll need to help him find: guiding him toward a future that will work for him, building that future with our bare hands, if necessary. For today, though, what matters is just his love itself, the sheer deep persistence of it. My job is not to make him declare a reason for that love or to diagnose one myself. My job is simply to race alongside him, helping him make his connection.

Karen Heath teaches writing at Harvard University. She lives with her husband and son in Massachusetts, near a stop on the Fitchburg Line.