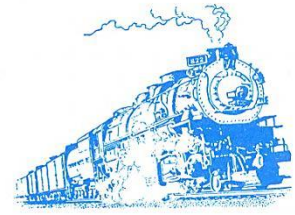


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



JANUARY 24, 2022 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 42 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 1



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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The Semaphore is the monthly (except July) newsletter of the South Shore Model Railway Club & Museum (SSMRC) and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The SSMRC, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please address all correspondence regarding this publication to: *The Semaphore*, 11 Hancock Rd., Hingham, MA 02043. ©2022
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VOLUME 42 ■■■■■ NUMBER 1 ■■■■■ JANUARY 2022

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice President.....	Rich Herlihy
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Eric Mercer
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bryan Miller (*22)
	Bob England (*22)
	Roger St. Peter (*23)
	Gary Mangelinkx (*23)

BILL OF LADING

Chief’s Corner	3
Contests	3, 14
Editor’s Notes.	10
Form 19 Calendar.....	3
Members.....	10
Memories.....	4
Potpourri.....	5
Running Extra.....	12
What are You Doing?.....	11

ON THE COVER: Central Vermont Consols #462 and #468 at the Rte. 32 crossing in Monson, Mass. The only steamers the CV allowed on the “Southern Division” (Palmer-New London) were these 2-8-0s, due to the many wooden bridges on the route. All the smoke—especially from the second loco and clarity of this 1952 photo by Robert A. Buck make it seem like more recent than 70 years-ago! And the classy auto just adds to the thought “I wish I was there!”
(Photo courtesy of Bob’s son Kenneth Buck)

FORM 19 ORDERS

JANUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, January 31st 8 p.m.

FEBRUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, February 7th 8 p.m.

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, February 10th 8 p.m.

TRAINS ‘n TOUCHDOWNS

Saturday, February 12th All day

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

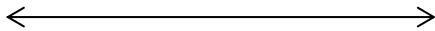
Sunday, February 20th

FEBRUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, February 28th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Don Pierce** on winning this month’s “50-50 Raffle!”



Congratulations to these folks on their entry of Al Taylor’s Crossword Puzzle “Amtrak 50th Anniversary Finale”:

Ron Clough
Dan Peterson
Fred Lockhart
“Gunny”
Doug Buchanan

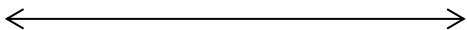
Roger St. Peter
Don Pierce
Savery Moore
Al Munn
Ye Ed

All went home with nice train calendars, supplied by:

Al Taylor
Don Pierce
Roger Puglisi
Fred Lockhart
Savery Moore
“Gunny”

Bryan Miller
Ron Clough
Doug Buchanan
Dan Peterson
Al Munn
Ye Ed

Thanks to all for the fun of the “2022 Calendar Contest”!



OK, one more Amtrak contest! I know I said last month’s was the “last” but I found another one that Al Taylor had made and it’s a favorite—“word find”. “Amtrak VI” is at the back of the newsletter. There are extra copies in the train room. Don’t forget your name and good luck! Drawing will be at the March meeting.

CHIEF’S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Progress

We are another month into our largest project in a long time; Cedar Hill was the last. Again this month I can report that I am very happy with the progress we are making, considering we lost some momentum with the holidays and Covid. As we finished last Thursday night, Bob England was finishing up a power supply station for part of the new section that starts in the staging room and extends halfway through the new curves connecting to the Boston staging yard. I believe he wants to have it tested in the next day or so. Next, he has one other power supply station to build out (power supply, boosters, circuit breakers, detection and all associated wiring) under Boston staging for the new loop with tracks completing continuous running for shows and open running. While he is building that, his helpers will be installing feeders, running power buses and connecting the feeders. After that, we need to check out the existing Boston/Great lakes electrical to repair any disconnects due to the move. One thing that needs to be replaced is new RR Circuits equipment to operate the E turnouts (from your throttle), as that equipment was attached to the staging room studs that were removed; it was relocated because it also controlled



turnouts on other parts of the railroad. Once all electrical power is restored, all the new work will need to be tested for proper



operating conditions. We are looking at mid-February, barring any unforeseen events, after that the line will be put into service. The Benchwork Committee has started replacing the fascia, where the electrical work is done and has started painting bare wood on the new work as all major bench work pieces for this expansion are done as is roadbed. Track will be finished shortly.



Over in Middleton, John Sheridan and Paul III have been working through

quite a few electrical problems in power district two, during the last couple of weeks, which include the main line tracks, the station track and REA track. Most of the problems have involved power bleeding through from one block to another. The issue that occurs is when fixing one problem this could leave another block dead until the next problem is fixed, and so on and on until each block is worked on.

One example, he reports, is that the REA turnout was never wired, but it worked because gaps were never cut at the end of the switch, so it was getting power from the siding--but that siding was powered from the wrong block??? This area was added after Middleton was built and who knows how all this happens: too many years, too many hands. I'm sure anyone that worked on this meant well. I know it can be frustrating to run trains if there is a dead track while this work is going on but when it is done it will be well worth it. The good news is, according to John, that this is the worst power district.

What's next

After the mainline is running and open we will continue with upgrading the electrical system, adding more feeders to the mainline electrical busses on older portions of temporary sections of the railroad that are still being used, including the Boston/Great Lakes mainline through the staging yard area. Most of

you will not notice the work as the downtime will be minimal during the day. Next, we will be making the Great Lakes Yard a through yard with a new turnout off the main including a new turnout ladder to connect all three tracks; this will make the yard more useful. The turnout will be built in place, as both the main track and the diverging route are both curved. But that work area can easily be by-passed, using one of the new crossovers in the staging room and run left-handed to turnout #22 in Boston to get back onto the main with no interruption.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who has been working on the railroad to complete both projects. Our work benefits all members and will make the railroad more fun to operate. As usual, I'm always interested in hearing a member's questions or concerns

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

Semaphore Memories

JANUARY 2017 (5 years ago)

- Bob England designs new circuit for Tortoise switch machines, making replacement un-necessary.
- STB grants authority to the Genesee & Wyoming to acquire control of Providence & Worcester RR.
- MBTA reintroduces weekend Ski Trains from North Station to new station Wachusett, where passengers transfer to free shuttle to Wachusett ountain.
- MBTA announces it will not extend its contract with Keolis beyond 2022.
- Return of legendary Ski Train, *Winter Park Express*, from Denver to Winter Park, Colo.; first since 2009.
- RR Museum at Strasburg, Penna. Joins forces with the Smithsonian Institution.
- Vermont Rail System paints its newest, ex-FEC SD70M-2 into its traditional bright red dress with white lettering.
- Western Maryland Scenic RR predict restoration completion by Memorial Day. (What year?-Ed.)
- After retiring from CPR as CEO, E. Hunter Harrison rumored to be headed for senior position at CSX.
- Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus announces shut-down in May, putting all equipment up for sale.
- Netherlands announces that all 4,000+ daily passenger trains to be powered by wind energy.

JANUARY 2012 (10 Years Ago)

- VIA Rail Canada suspends the *Chaleur* service to Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula, due to unsafe bridges.
- Canadian National completes merger of Duouth, Missabe & Iron Range, Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific and Wisconsin Central Ltd.

● Conway Scenic trades U23B #2820 and B23-7 #1943 for former Finger Lakes GP9 #1751.

● Woodland Scenics Company burns to the ground in Linn Creek, Missouri.

● Metro-North Commuter Railroad takes four months to return to normal schedule, after Hurricane Irene.

● Indonesia Railway staff hangs concrete balls above tracks to try to prevent commuters from riding on the roofs of passenger cars.

● Amtrak lets contracts to build 70 new electric locomotives and 130 long-distance, single-level passenger cars.

● Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority moves ahead with plan to build layover and maintenance facility in Brunswick, Maine, for *Downeaster* trains.

● Track being installed on benchwork section between Third Leg and staging yards. Scenery committee working on Back Shop structures in Transfer Table section, as well as city around Trolley area. Wiring on Mountain Div. mainline and first Classification Yard.

JANUARY 2007 (15 years ago)

● Former Broadway Limited streamlined observation car "Mountain View" donated to Railroaders' Museum in Altoona, Penna. by Bennett Levin.

● MBTA announces plan to buy 38 new locomotives and 75 double-decker coaches.

● Mt. Washington Cog Railway converts steam loco 'Waumbek' to burn biodiesel, instead of coal.

● Law passed allowing MBTA Police to write tickets up to \$250 for fare evaders and RMV suspends licenses for unpaid tickets.

● NJ Transit introduces bi-level passenger cars for the first time, operating between Trenton and New York City.

JANUARY 2002 (20 Years Ago)

● P1K introduces popular Budd RDC cars.

● Amtrak's *Downeaster* service doing better than anticipated, after 30-days of operation.

● MBTA announces new computerized fare card, to be introduced by mid-2004.

● VIA Rail Canada purchases 139 "Nightstar" passenger cars from the UK, and renames them "Renaissance".

● Guilford closes Yards #7 & 8 in Somerville; the last freight yards on the North Side of Boston.

● "Cranberry World", a long-tim attraction in Plymouth, to move to Edaville.

● Norfolk County RR Club formed, meeting every two months at Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood.

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

● Quincy Wholesale Grocery club car introduced.

JANUARY 1997 (25 Years Ago)

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

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

● Double-tracking of ex-B&A between Westborough and Worcester completed. (Removed by Conrail in the '80s)

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

● Bombardier chooses Plattsburg, NY for new factory.

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

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

JANUARY 1992 (30 Years Ago)

● Amtrak takes delivery of GE Dash 8-32BWH locomotives, named "Pepsi can" scheme by railfans.

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

● Valley RR in Conn. sells its Chinese-built "Mike" to the New York, Susquehanna & Western.

● New Visitor Center at Horseshoe Curve outside of Altoona, Penna opens.

● Semaphore Publishing Co. moves to new factory at Riverside, thanks to Doland Construction Co.

JANUARY 1987 (35 Years Ago)

● Conrail engineer Ricky Gates, under the influence of marijuana, proceeded with his light-engine move through red signals and into the path of the 128-MPH Washington-Boston *Colonial*, causing 16 deaths and the institution of strict drug and alcohol-testing policies by the FRA.

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

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

● NJ Transit announces a monorail to be built, connecting Newark Airport and Northeast Corridor.

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

JANUARY 1982 (40 Years Ago)

● Stan Darcy introduces Car Registration at SSMRC.

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

● Amtrak takes delivery of 2nd generation "Amfleet" coaches and Lounge-Cafés, with more leg room and curtains on the larger windows.

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

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

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

POTPOURRI

THE MBTA ANNOUNCED that single-track service over **the Gloucester Drawbridge** is expected to be restored by May 2022, allowing Commuter Rail service to resume to Gloucester and Rockport Stations. While replacement construction continues, the disruption in service has provided an opportunity to accelerate other projects planned for

the Rockport Line that would have required service interruptions later in 2022. Several intensive projects were launched that could only be accomplished with service suspended, and this extended suspension of train service allowed the MBTA to complete projects more efficiently. These projects include: The 100% replacement of more than 11,000 treated wood ties with plastic ties containing no preservative chemicals. The distance between Cleveland Street in Gloucester and Poole's Lane in Rockport was completely rebuilt using a new type of tie that does not require preservative chemical. In addition to replacing more than 11,000 ties in this area, the rail was also treated to bring it within current neutral temperature standards in order to prevent track alignment issues in very hot weather. The track was also realigned both vertically and horizontally. Eleven 150-year-old "stacked stone" box culverts were removed and replaced with concrete pipe restoring water flows, ensuring they are ready for the predicted changes in weather patterns brought about by global warming. A twelfth culvert will be replaced in the early spring of 2022 (before service is restored) to complete the culvert that was deemed at risk.

- At Rockport switches and special track work beyond Poole's Lane were renewed and brought up to current standards for reliable service.
- Gloucester and Rockport Stations were deep cleaned and repainted to refresh their appearance and improve the customer experience.
- Between Gloucester Station and the Drawbridge, a new interlocking was installed to replace a spring-powered switch that used outdated technology. The interlocking allows the train dispatcher located in the central dispatching office to control the track used by each train and allows the dispatcher to display signals to control the movement of trains through the area. The grade crossing at Maple Street in Gloucester was replaced.



VERMONT TRANSPORTATION AGENCY (VTrans) and Vermont Rail System (VRS) have reached a settlement agreement with CSX, Norfolk Southern (NS) and Genesee & Wyoming (GWI) that resolves their concerns about competition if CSX and Pan Am merge. The agreement, which CSX filed with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) on Dec. 31, 2021, involves trackage, interchange, operating, discretionary option, and excessive dwell option (inbound, outbound) rights. STB proceedings on the proposed CSX/Pan Am combination are under way. On Dec. 10, the agency announced that it would hold a virtual public

hearing on the CSX-Pan Am revised merger application. The hearing is set for Jan. 13, 2022, and it will continue on Jan. 14, 2022, if necessary. According to STB, the hearing date "will be considered the close of the record (depending on whether the hearing is one or two days long). In accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(e)(3), the Board's decision would be issued no later than 90 days after the close of the record." That means the CSX-Pan Am merger decision would be made no later than April 13 or 14, 2022. (RA)



AMTRAK AND MASSACHUSETTS transportation officials have asked federal regulators to impose conditions that would protect current and future passenger and commuter service in the Bay State as part of CSX Transportation's proposed acquisition of Pan Am Railways. CSX, Pan Am, and Norfolk Southern submitted filings backing the end-to-end merger, while Canadian Pacific raised concerns about the future of Pan Am Southern's former Boston & Maine main line through Hoosac Tunnel. Amtrak and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority each asked the board to impose seven conditions as part of an approval of the merger. Massachusetts and the MBTA said discussions with CSX have been positive but have not yet produced a written agreement. The state said it would withdraw its request for conditions if the two sides reach a deal. Among the conditions sought: Transfer of dispatching on state-owned routes to the MBTA; drafting of a plan to address "threats to capacity and to existing and projected future passenger rail service over MBTA-owned trackage;" a joint inspection of Pan Am and Pan Am Southern facilities to ensure they meet industry standards; and a commitment to maintaining the state-owned "Knowledge Corridor" between Springfield and East Northfield as Class 4 track. Massachusetts and Amtrak, in separate filings asked the STB to make CSX commit to studying and allowing proposed passenger service in Western Massachusetts over both the CSX former Boston & Albany main line and the Pan Am Southern former B&M main west of Ayer. Amtrak and state officials also asked the board to ensure that CSX would permit an expansion of Amtrak service, including seasonal *Berkshire Flyer* service between Albany, N.Y., and Pittsfield, Mass.; multiple round-trip service between Springfield and Worcester, Mass.; up to two daily round trips between Albany and Worcester; and improvements to Union Station in Springfield as a hub for east-west and north-south service. Amtrak also sought

conditions that would guarantee CSX cooperation with proposed improvements to *Downeaster* service linking Brunswick and Portland, Maine, with Boston. (TN)

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A PROJECT TO REFURBISH 1940s-vintage PCC trolley cars used on one Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority line is more than two years behind schedule, with the first of the cars now expected to be in service by the end of the winter. Eight cars are being updated in a \$7.9 million project for use on the 2.6-mile, eight-station Mattapan line, which connects to the subway Red Line and 20 bus routes. The first was originally supposed to be in service in August 2019, and more recently was projected to be in operation before the end of 2021. But the MBTA's chief engineer, Erik Stoothoff, said work on the first car has faced issues ranging from COVID-19 delays to removal of lead paint and wrong-sized parts. Cars were also found to have more corrosion and damage than anticipated. (TN)



●●●●●

AMTRAK IS BACKING Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern's proposed combination, Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC), and CP is committing to support Amtrak's service expansion in two U.S. regions, the railroads reported on Jan. 6. "CP has been an excellent host of Amtrak intercity passenger service year after year and has established itself as a leader in the railroad industry," Amtrak President Stephen J. Gardner said during the announcement. "We welcome CP's commitment to our efforts with states and others to expand Amtrak service and are pleased to have reached an agreement formalizing CP's support of Amtrak expansion in the Midwest and the South. "Given CP's consistent record as an Amtrak host, we support CP's proposal to expand its network. This is exactly what Congress and the [Biden] Administration are seeking: Amtrak and the freight railroads working together to benefit freight customers, Amtrak passengers, our state/regional partners and the general public." (RA)

●●●●●

THE BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE Engineers and Trainmen (BLET) and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWED) - both divisions of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters - have re-affiliated under the Transportation Trades Department (TTD) banner this week. With the addition of these two unions, and their over 80,000

members, TTD now represents every rail union in the United States. "Our re-affiliation with TTD and its Rail Labor Division (RLD) once again unites all rail labor unions in one common Organization. We look forward to working with all of TTD's officers, staff and affiliated unions; we are always stronger, and our members are best represented when we are working together," said BLET President Dennis Pierce. "I am excited for the prospect of advancements for all railroad workers that could come through all of rail labor uniting under TTD. I look forward to working with TTD President Greg Regan, Secretary-Treasurer Shari Semelsberger and the very capable TTD Staff. Rail Labor is always strongest and prospers most when we stand united against the railroads, and TTD will certainly help with our fight," said BMWED President Freddie Simpson. (RPA)

●●●●●

THE MOMENTUM FOR THE RETURN of a Scranton (Pa.)-to-New York City rail route continues to build. The Monroe County Commissioners just approved a resolution to support the line, which would bring back rail service between Scranton, Pa., and New York City with several stops along the way. U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-Pa.) also stamped his approval on the route, saying the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding, which includes \$66 billion for the restoration of rail lines, should help. Amtrak used to run the line years ago, and an economic impact study was recently completed. The study revealed a Scranton-NYC route would generate \$87 million in annual economic activity and nearly \$3 billion from one-time investments. It is expected to take at least a year for Amtrak to complete its overall infrastructure assessment to determine how much it would cost to restore the rail line. The national passenger rail service is looking at 40 new passenger rail proposals that would call for \$75 billion in federal funding over the next 15 years. There is talk of making the Scranton-to-NYC rails capable of higher speeds. The route is currently being used by freight trains. (RA) Amtrak never ran this route before. The NJ portion was abandoned by Conrail.-Ed.

●●●●●

WOW...check out this paint job!



Commemorating the 50th anniversary of Operation Lifesaver (OLI), Amtrak on Jan. 12 released into service a specially painted P-42 diesel, emblazoned on both sides with the message, "See Tracks? Think Train!" The diesel locomotive, unveiled during a ceremony at Washington (D.C.) Union Station, will run on Amtrak's national network, the railroad reported. It was painted at an Amtrak maintenance facility in Beech Grove, Ind. Among those attending the event was Amit Bose, who was confirmed by the Senate as the 15th Federal Railroad Administrator on the same day. Non-profit OLI was established in 1972 with the aim of reducing railroad-related collisions, deaths and injuries across the United States, utilizing the "3 E's – Education, Engineering and Enforcement." It offers education and awareness programs in 46 states and Washington, D.C. Trained volunteers provide free safety presentations to law enforcement, first responders, school-aged children, school bus operators, truckers, student drivers and more. (RA)

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WHEN HUNDREDS OF NEW Red Line cars are shipped from Springfield to Boston, they will be commissioned using the recently completed \$22-million Red Line Test Track and Vehicle Testing Facility. This was built as part of the Red Line Transformation Program. The dedicated track and facility will give the MBTA flexibility and control over the testing process and will allow a faster rollout of the new fleet. The new test track is adjacent to Cabot Yard (near Broadway Station), allowing easy access for vehicle deliveries and testing without interfering with regular maintenance or competing for access on the mainline with regular service. (MBTA via RRE) I'd love Jeremy's comments about this!-Ed.

●●●●●●

AMTRAK WILL REDUCE Northeast Corridor, long-distance, and state-supported train frequencies between Jan. 24 and March 27, the passenger railroad announced earlier this month, citing "staffing challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the highly active Omicron variant." Overall, plans will amount to an 8% reduction in train departures over the 63-day period. That will include 8% of Northeast Regional departures; two weekly departures on nine long-distance routes, which will be reduced to five-day-a-week operation;

complete suspension of the *Silver Meteor* for the 10-week period; and 6% of state-supported regional service. Amtrak said that while nearly 97% of employees are fully vaccinated, "several hundred of our on-board service personnel, conductors, engineers, and mechanical crews continue to be impacted by COVID infections or exposures. These Covid-related absences, when combined with the general skilled workforce shortage Amtrak and other transportation companies are facing, have reduced our ability to consistently deliver our current schedules and impacted the pace of hiring and training efforts." (TN)

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CSX TRANSPORTATION agreed to Amtrak's conditions regarding passenger service in New England on Wednesday, in advance of the start of a scheduled public hearing on CSX's proposed acquisition of Pan Am Railways. Amtrak on Jan. 3 said it would oppose the CSX-Pan Am deal unless the Surface Transportation Board imposed seven conditions on the merger. Wednesday, in a letter to regulators, CSX asked the board to include Amtrak's conditions.

Among the conditions CSX agreed to:

- Cooperate with proposed expansion of passenger service between Albany, N.Y., and Boston via CSX's Boston & Albany main line from the Albany area to Worcester, Mass.
- Work with Amtrak and the Northern New England Passenger Authority to expand and improve Downeaster service linking Maine and Boston, including the addition of positive train control on trackage in New Hampshire and Maine.
- Host seasonal *Berkshire Flyer* trains between Albany and Pittsfield, Mass., this year as special trains, pending construction of a 1,000-foot station track in Pittsfield.
- Give Amtrak trains priority over freight traffic. (Oh, really?-Ed. See*)
- Ensure that Norfolk Southern intermodal and automotive trains, which are shifting from Pan Am Southern to new trackage rights over CSX's B&A, do not interfere with current or proposed Amtrak service between Albany and Worcester.

Amtrak said Thursday evening the two sides had not yet achieved a full agreement.

"We are pleased that CSX has agreed to accept six of the seven conditions Amtrak requested to ensure that performance and expansion of Amtrak service is not harmed if the Surface Transportation Board approves CSX's proposed acquisition of Pan Am

Railways,” the passenger railroad said in a statement. (TN) *With CSX’s very negative response to Amtrak’s restoration plans for two trains/day between New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama, I question how sincere they are about giving Amtrak trains priority over freight!-Ed.

●●●●●●

WORK IS SET TO BEGIN in April on a new dispatching center for short line company Genesee & Wyoming near downtown St. Albans. The 10,000-square-foot building, on a long-vacant site, will replace an older facility in the historic, ex-Central Vermont Rwy. office building. St. Albans City Manager Dominic Cloud said the company was considering moving out of town but the city was able to put together a package for the new facility. The building site will be sold by the city to a local firm, which will then lease a portion to G&W. The G&W facility will only take up about a third of the 5.5-acre site; the city is looking for a tenant for the remainder. (TN)

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A new high-tech railcar developed by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Department of Energy is moving from Oregon to the Association of American Railroads Transportation Technology Center test track near Pueblo for multiple-car testing. The Rail Escort Vehicle is designed to transport security personnel during the shipment of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste and is the last piece needed for a complete railcar system required by DOE to transport spent nuclear fuel to disposal and storage facilities across the country. (TN) Hummm...shape looks like something we know from the past!-Ed.

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THE LONG-ORPHANED TALGO trainsets built but never used for extended Hiawatha service to Madison, Wis., have finally found a home in Nigeria. Talgo will sell the equipment to the Nigerian government for a new 23-mile, 11-station commuter line in the Lagos area slated to begin service later this year, with a capacity of 500,000 passengers per day. Lagos, with a population of 27

million, is one of the most densely populated cities in Africa, and by 2025 is projected to be one of the world’s five largest cities. The two 14-car Series 8 trainsets were ordered in 2009 by Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle for \$47 million as part of the plan to extend the Hiawatha route from Milwaukee to Madison. But after Republican Scott Walker won the 2010 election, he turned back the federal funding for route improvements and attempted to cancel the agreement struck by Doyle, a Democrat, for the equipment. Talgo sued and received about \$50 million in payments and settlements, while retaining ownership of the equipment. Under that settlement, Talgo agreed to return 30% of the net proceeds of any sale of the equipment to the state, up to a limit of \$9.7 million. The trainsets were eventually moved to Amtrak’s Beech Grove (Ind.) Heavy Maintenance Facility for storage, receiving maintenance from Talgo every few months to keep them ready for operation. (TN)

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SCHNEIDER HAS SIGNED a long-term agreement with Union Pacific (UP) to be its primary intermodal rail provider in the western U.S., effective January 2023, the companies reported on Jan. 19. “With the combination of Schneider’s eastern partnership with CSX, the transition [to UP in the west] will create more direct transcontinental connections for the company’s customers,” according to Schneider. The trucking, intermodal and logistics services provider has a North American intermodal fleet of more than 25,000 containers and said it plans to double its intermodal size by 2030. UP won Schneider’s business from BNSF, whose contract expires with Schneider on Dec. 31, 2022. “BNSF’s intermodal business was about 50% bigger than UP’s last year, but in the past six months, UP has announced intermodal contract wins from Knight-Swift Transportation Holdings (KNX), APL Logistics, and now Schneider (SNDR),” comments Scott Group of Wolfe Research. “So, UP seems to be winning some natural share that should help it narrow the intermodal revenue gap. (RA)

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UNION PACIFIC has expressed interest in a new autonomous battery-electric intermodal car concept developed by a group headed by three former



Space X engineers. The concept under

development by Parallel Systems would see intermodal containers carried by pairs of powered battery-electric wheelsets, moving in "platoons" of cars, but capable of splitting off to individual destinations en route. The company went public with its plan this week, saying it has raised \$49.55 million for construction of the vehicles. Parallel Systems detailed the concept, saying benefits would include the ability to serve smaller and less expensive terminals closer to shippers and customers, and reduction of greenhouse gases by moving current container moves by truck to the autonomous rail system. It says its model would make container moves by rail financially feasible for shorter distance than the 500 miles currently considered the shortest economical move for railroads.

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

TRAINS

CP+KCS Merger

Big Plans

What You Should See in 2022

Buy Now, Try it Later

In My Own Words

Don't Say it Never Happened

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

From Flat to Full Size: Hood Creamery in HO

Model Boston & Maine Brookside Creamery Cars

Diverging Points

The Joy of Play

MODEL RAILROADER

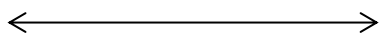
Expanding Across New England

Wiring Quick Start

Meet the MR&T State Line Layout

DCC Currents

Digitrax's Quad Switch Stationary Decoder



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains "Newswire", Railway Age, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger, Rail Passenger Assoc.

LIBRARY CORNER

This month's donation to our Library is:

(No new books this month)

New books will be displayed on the table in the Break Room for a month and can be checked out, by using the check-out sheet on the Break

Room counter. They will be filed alphabetically in the Library afterwards.

Don't forget we have a great DVD collection in the mailroom. Filed alphabetically. No need to sign out but please return to the book return tray in the Break Room when you're done. Happy reading and viewing!

Dave Clinton, Librarian

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

The next clinic will be Thursday, February 10th. In order to reserve a spot at the clinic, please email me and include the type and brand of locomotive or equipment that you want to work on (such as "Atlas GP38") and what you want to do with it (such as "install decoder"). I will confirm all requests. For reservations--email me at: daveclinton@verizon.net . Please feel free to email me with any questions about the clinic, also.

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Special thanks to **Al Taylor**, his son **Jimmy** and **Rich Herlihy** for replacing our water heater! It is so nice to be able to wash hands and the floor/bathrooms with hot water. The chemicals work better, it seems. The 30-year-old hot water tank didn't owe us anything but what an awful job to replace it, so much appreciated and job well-done.
2. Welcome to Volume 42 of The Semaphore. We're always looking for articles and news contributions and pictures. Please contact me with any questions or ideas.

.....*David N. Clinton*

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
(John 8:32)

MEMBER NEWS

(Note: The "Health & Welfare Committee", Ye Ed, would like to hear of any member who is ill, hospitalized or special occasion news, so we can keep the membership advised of these happenings.)

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

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

- Bob Farrenkopf February 2nd
- Jeremy Cahill February 3rd



Don Pierce.....February 5th
Steve Wintermeier.....February 5th
Roger St. Peter.....February 6th
Paul Agnew.....February 18th



Meanwhile, I've heard from these folks on

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Savery Moore: "I spent three Sundays in December firing Edaville Railroad's steam locomotive #11. We made between 7 and 9 round trips each night. There is so much more to firing than shoveling coal, adding water and watching the gauges. It was hard, dirty work, and I loved every minute of it!"



Gunny: "Sorry no photos this time. Range Safety with Police is winding down, hunting season is over until Deer season starts again in the spring. Bambi is safe until then. Hunter safety classes are going strong with classes scheduled until May. Spending time at the club doing maintenance, like fixing the saws and other tools we have in the model and wood shops. Getting the new well pump was a little bit of an ordeal but all worked out well."

Kurt Kramke: "In December the club had a Christmas display at the light show. I have been painting brass locomotives and passenger cars; I have a Y5 and Y2 in brass now. I also have been working



on scenery on the HO layout. I am still moving non-rail structures around before I plant them. I am planning on being at the club for the March show."



Chip Mullen:

"Another month of Covid restrictions that made time available to finish off a couple projects that I had on the back burner for a while. First was the build of a

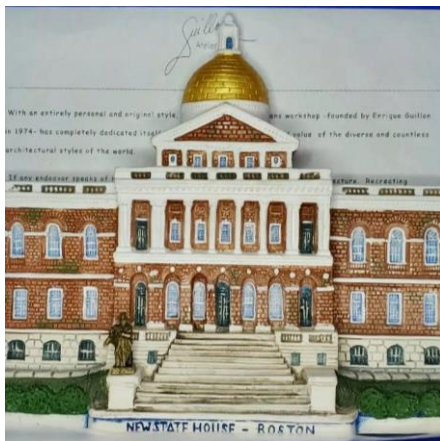
small grist mill kit I received as a Christmas present last year. I made a very small diorama using it and tried a new technique for making water out of white glue and toilet paper that I learned about from a Swedish guy on YouTube. The result was pretty good so now I'm trying to figure out where I can plug it into a layout. Second was finally finding a source for scale multi-sheave block and tackle that I could use to finish the modification of the Boston & Maine 250-ton crane modification that I reported on many months ago. These cranes all come from Athearn and Bachman with a single fall tackle set for the boom topping lift which is really off-base, when it comes to how a heavy crane is equipped. I obtained and installed four sheave blocks that I used to replace the single sheave set and then threaded falls through to the topping lift winch. I am pretty happy with the result that I think compares favorably with photos of M3365 I've seen on rrpicturearchives.net."



Ron Clough: John Madden dies on 12/28/21 at 85. I suppose you wonder what the headline has to do with trains. Well, in one of my many travels across both the US and Canada on board Amtrak and Via Rail, probably most documented in my travelogues that I wrote for the *Semaphore* over the years, you will understand the connection. Once on board and situated in my seat (I never got a sleeper; the coach seat was enough to sleep in), I always scouted out the lounge car, as that was the place to meet people and enjoy the scenery, especially with the Amtrak *Superliner* "Sightseer Lounge" cars having the windows wrap up and over onto the roof. Well, on one of those trips aboard the *California Zephyr*, heading westbound from Chicago to San Francisco, I headed up to the lounge car to enjoy the scenery and the company of other travelers. In one corner of the lounge car was a small group of folks who were chatting and welcomed me into their conversations. I sat down and who was "holding court" but John Madden! As you may or may not know, John never traveled by plane and on this trip, and many others, he always took Amtrak. It was before he got his own bus. We had a lively discussion about everything in life and as folks were dropping off to go to bed, John would always say "So, okay, we'll talk about you next". I was

always one of the last to leave! This journey went on for another night and two more days. I couldn't wait to get back to the lounge car each day to sit with John as he "held court". This trip lasted until John got off the train in Oakland and I waved good bye to a great new friend! John was a very polite person and gentlemen and I will always remember those three days that I spent with him. I always looked forward to meeting him again on another trip, but that will never happen.

Peter Palica: I recently purchased the below used and discontinued 9"x8" background model of the Massachusetts State House on eBay. It was crafted by Guillon Ceramics in Argentina and could probably be used in either an N or HO scale scene.



Roger St. Peter: "Been busy with my grandson and continuing to work on the SSMRC layout with the crew--hoping to be ready for spring show."



Ross Hall: "Trying to finish up some long-term rolling-stock projects and am now completing my collection of Ambroid open-ended B&M "splinter fleet" passenger cars. There are now two baggage cars, two combines (baggage-smokers on the B&M) and four coaches in the consist, correctly painted, lettered and numbered. Noting in prototype photos that these cars had electrical conduit pipes along their roofs to allow power through a consist, I have been installing brass rods on his cars, each with seven snips of of hookup wire insulation to represent the joining pieces."

Ye Ed: Painting steam locomotives is more of a challenge ("pain") than other equipment, I feel. That's why this 2-8-2 has been on the "project shelf" for 7 years. I finally got up the time, and energy, to start...and that's the toughest part. Taking it all apart, cleaning the mechanism, drilling

holes in the headlight for lighting and in the tender for DCC and then cleaning (stripping), priming, masking, painting and decaling. Masking is usually necessary on steam because the smokebox and firebox were usually painted with a heat-resistant graphite paint mixture. Any appliances in those two areas were not painted graphite, so they have to be manually-painted black; like the headlight, handrails and piping—and this loco has an Elesco FW heater plus dual air pumps on the smokebox front, so all of that needs to be black. What a job and not for the "faint of heart" or anyone in a rush! The sense of satisfaction, upon completion, is great, though.



RUNNING EXTRA

MRL Rails Returning to BNSF

Written by Marybeth Luczak, Executive Editor, *Railway Age* 1-11-2022

After more than 30 years of operating BNSF-owned main line between Huntley, Mont., and Sandpoint, Idaho, Montana Rail Link (MRL) reported on Jan. 10 that it is ceasing its long-term lease with the Class I. As the freight market has evolved, more than 90% of freight volume moving on MRL is on BNSF trains, the Class II—*Railway Age's* 2013 Regional Railroad of the Year—explained in a Jan. 10 letter to employees; it issued a media notice later the same day.

"When MRL was created in 1987, our vision was to become a safe, reliable regional railroad in partnership with BNSF, then Burlington Northern, to provide customers with competitive, consistent service, and employees with good, stable jobs," President Derek Ollmann wrote to employees of MRL, which was founded by entrepreneur Dennis Washington and is a part of The Washington Companies. "Thanks to you, we have achieved that vision together and answered the call since the day we began operating trains." MRL, "The Main Street of Montana," has operated more than 900 miles of main line and branch trackage from Jones Junction (Huntley), Mont., west to Sandpoint, Idaho, with trackage rights beyond Sandpoint to Spokane, Wash., over BNSF.

MRL, on Jan. 10, reported that the line has become a “critical link in BNSF’s northern transcontinental network, delivering grain, consumer and industrial products to the West Coast. By MRL ending its lease and BNSF resuming operation of its line, BNSF will eliminate the need to interchange freight between the two railroads, strengthening the resiliency of the supply chain and enhancing rail capacity in the Pacific Northwest.” BNSF has committed to retaining the 1,200-plus union and non-union employees of MRL in their current jobs with similar pay, benefits, seniority and other employment terms, according to MRL.



While MRL and BNSF have reached an agreement to terminate the lease before it concludes, the move

will require the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with the affected unions, and it must be approved by the Surface Transportation Board, MRL said. The regional noted, too, that network customers, including more than 150 local businesses, will maintain their service arrangements and rates; the vast majority of traffic moving on MRL today is subject to rates already established by BNSF.



BNSF President and CEO Katie

“There have been many changes in the rail industry since this long-term lease was signed, and given the need to be competitive in the current

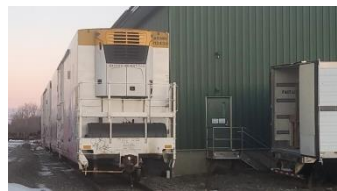
environment, we believe that this was the right time to revisit our longstanding agreement with BNSF,” Ollmann said. “This agreement protects our workers, our customers and our long-term commitment to safety and it will ensure a more seamless operation of rail services in Montana.”

“We are excited to bring an important part of our railroad’s history back into our operations at BNSF,” BNSF President and CEO Katie Farmer said. “The line will become the MRL Subdivision of our Montana Division in recognition of the shared heritage of BNSF and MRL. “We welcome the MRL team and customers back into the BNSF family. We will continue to invest in the business, provide great service and maintain the highest level of safety just as we have for over a century in Montana. This will best position employees, customers and the communities we serve for future success.”

Maine’s potato crop is so big railroads are being used for 1st time in 40 years to transport it

Bangor Daily News by Paula Brewer January 15, 2022

When Don Flannery of the Maine Potato Board suggested last fall that moving potatoes by rail would be ideal in the face of a trucking bottleneck, he didn’t know



what a gem of an idea it was. But LaJoie Growers of Van Buren knew, and this month Maine potatoes have left Aroostook County on rail cars, bound for big markets, for the first time

in more than 40 years.

The 2021 harvest made history for its size — a roughly 20 percent greater yield than normal, thanks to near-perfect growing conditions. But that led to a few problems along the way: What to do with all the extra spuds, and how to get them to market in the middle of a trucking shortage. Enter the Loring Development Authority, which offered the use of some unused buildings on the former Loring Air Force Base in Limestone — gratefully accepted by a few local growers who were out of storage options. In November, Maine Potato Board Executive Director Don Flannery, said most raw and processed potatoes move out of The County via truck, which was even more challenging with slowdowns and driver shortages. The whole thing had delayed movement of The County’s crop to market, Flannery said. Which is precisely why Flannery said rail would be ideal, but refrigeration was needed for perishable products like potatoes. And necessity begets ingenuity.



“The Maine Northern Railroad and Union Pacific Railway arranged for refrigerated rail cars to be sent to Van Buren,” the department said via Twitter. “Thirty-three refrigerated rail cars are now loaded with spuds and bound for Washington State.” The County’s use of rail earned a mention in *Railfan & Railroad* magazine out

of Bucklin, Missouri, in which reporter Justin Franz said some of the potatoes would move to Pan Am Railways in Massachusetts, then on to CSX

Potatoes sit in a refrigerated rail car in Van Buren, one of 33 rail cars that were loaded to make their journey from Aroostook County to Washington State.

(Canadian Pacific) and then to Union Pacific, bound for Washington state. Maine Northern Railway is one of three short-line railroads overseen by NBM Railways, headquartered in Saint John, New Brunswick, and a part of the JD Irving companies. The other two lines are NB Southern and Eastern Maine Railway.



AMTRAK VI

Find the words in the grid. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

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